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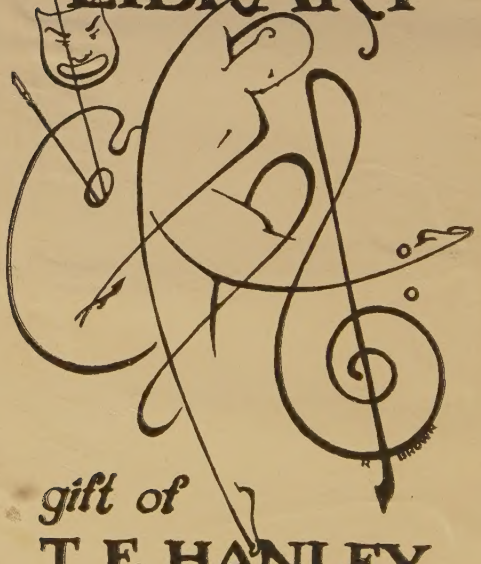

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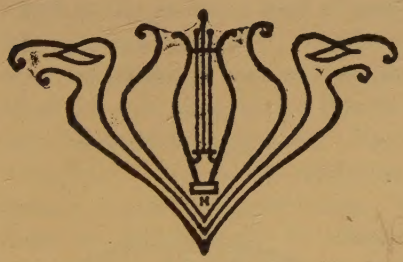

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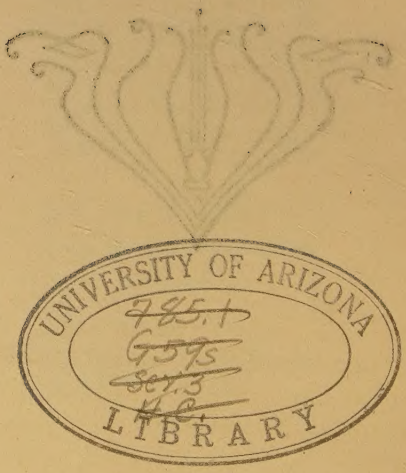

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PREFACE

CRITICISM of contemporary art is really a kind of prophecy. For the appreciation of the classical past is an act of present perception, not a mere memory of popular verdicts. The classics live only because they still express the vital feeling of to-day. The new art must do more,—must speak for the morrow. And as the poet is a kind of seer, the true critic is his prophetic herald.

It is with due humility that we approach a view of the work of our own time, with a dim feeling that our best will be a mere conjecture. But we shall the more cheerfully return to our resolution that our chief business is a positive appreciation. Where we cannot praise, we can generally be silent. Certain truths concerning contemporary art seem firmly grounded in the recorded past. The new Messiah never came with instant wide acclaim. Many false prophets flashed brilliantly on the horizon to fall as suddenly as they rose. In a refracted view we see the figures of the great projected in too large dimension upon their day. And precisely opposite we fail to glimpse the ephemeral lights obscuring the truly great. The lesson seems never to be learned; indeed it can, of course, never be learned. For that would imply an eternal paradox that the present generation must always distrust its own judgment.

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Who could possibly imagine in Schubert's time the sway he holds to-day. Our minds reel to think that by a mere accident were recovered the Passion of Bach and the symphonies of Schubert. Or must we prayerfully believe that a Providence will make the best prevail? And, by the way, the serious nature of this appreciation appears when we see how it was ever by the greatest of his time that the future master was heralded.

The symphony of the present age has perhaps fallen somewhat in estate. It was natural that it should rush to a high perfection in the halcyon days of its growth. It is easy to make mournful predictions of decadence. The truth is the symphony is a great form of art, like a temple or a tragedy. Like them it has had, it will have its special eras of great expression. Like them it will stay as a mode of utterance for new communities and epochs with varying nationality, or better still, with vanishing nationalism.

The tragedy was not exhausted with Sophocles, nor with Shakespeare nor with Goethe. So the symphony has its fallow periods and it may have a new resurgence under new climes. We are ever impatient to shelve a great form, like vain women afraid of the fashion. It is part of our constant rage for novelty. The shallower artist ever tinkered with new devices,—to some effects, in truth. Such is the empiric course of art that what is born of vanity may be crowned with highest inspiration.

The national element will fill a large part of our

survey. It marks a strange trait of our own age that this revival of the national idea falls in the very time when other barriers are broken. Ancient folk-song grew like the flower on the battle-field of races. But here is an anxious striving for a special dialect in music. Each nation must have its proper school; composers are strictly labelled, each one obedient to his national manner. This state of art can be but of the day. Indeed, the fairest promise of a greater future lies in the morrow's blending of these various elements in the land where each citizen has a mixed inheritance from the older nations.

In the bewildering midst of active spirits comes the irresistible impulse to a somewhat partisan warfare. The critic, if he could view himself from some empyræan perch, remote in time and place, might smile at his own vehemence. In the clash of aims he must, after all, take sides, for it is the tendency that is momentous; and he will be excited to greater heat the stronger the prophet that he deems false. When the strife is over, when currents are finally settled, we may take a more contented joy in the impersonal art that remains.

The choice from the mass of brilliant vital endeavor is a new burden and a source almost of dismay. Why should we omit so melodious a work as Moskowski's *Jeanne d'Arc*,—full of perhaps too facile charm? It was, of course, impossible to treat all the wonderful music of the Glazounows and the Kallinikows. And there is the limpid beauty of the

Bohemian *Suk,* or the heroic vigor of a *Volbach.* We should like to have mentioned *Robert Volkmann* as a later Romanticist; and *Gade* has ever seemed a true poet of the Scandinavian symphony.

Of the modern French we are loth to omit the symphonies of *Chausson* and of *Dukas.* In our own America it is a still harder problem. There is the masterly writing of a *Foote;* the older *Paine* has never been fully valued in the mad race for novelty. It would have been a joy to include a symphony of rare charm by *Martinus van Gelder.*

A critical work on modern art cannot hope to bestow a crown of laurels among living masters; it must be content with a view of active tendencies. The greatest classic has often come into the world amid least expectation. A critic in the year 1850 must need have omitted the Unfinished Symphony, which was then buried in a long oblivion.

The present author prefers to treat the main modern lines, considering the special work mainly as example. After all, throughout the realm of art the idea is greater than the poet, the whole art more than the artist,—though the particular enshrinement in enduring design may reflect a rare personality.

PHILIP H. GOEPP.

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SYMPHONIES AND THEIR MEANING

MODERN SYMPHONIES

CHAPTER I

THE SYMPHONY DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

AFTER the long dominance of German masters of the musical art, a reaction could not fail to come with the restless tendencies of other nations, who, having learned the lesson, were yet jealous of foreign models and eager to utter their own message. The later nineteenth century was thus the age of refraction of the classic tradition among the various racial groups that sprang up with the rise of the national idea. We can see a kind of beginning in the Napoleonic destruction of feudal dynasties. German authority in music at the beginning of the century was as absolute as Roman rule in the age of Augustus. But the seed was carried by teachers to the various centres of Europe. And, with all the joy we have in the new burst of a nation's song, there is no doubt that it is ever best uttered when it is grounded on the lines of classic art. Here is a paramount reason for the strength of the modern Russian school. With this semi-political cause in mind it is less difficult

to grasp the paradox that with all the growth of intercommunication the music of Europe moves in more detached grooves to-day than two centuries ago. The suite in the time of Bach is a special type and proof of a blended breadth and unity of musical thought in the various nations of Europe of the seventeenth century. In the quaint series of dances of the different peoples, with a certain international quality, one sees a direct effect of the Thirty Years' War,—the beneficent side of those ill winds and cruel blasts, when all kinds of nations were jostling on a common battle-ground. And as the folk-dances sprang from the various corners of Europe, so different nations nursed the artistic growth of the form. Each would treat the dances of the other in its own way, and here is the significance of Bach's separate suites,—English, French and German.

Nationalism seems thus a prevailing element in the music of to-day, and we may perceive two kinds, one spontaneous and full of charm, the other a result of conscious effort, sophisticated in spirit and in detail. It may as well be said that there was no compelling call for a separate French school in the nineteenth century as a national utterance. It sprang from a political rather than an artistic motive; it was the itch of jealous pride that sharply stressed the difference of musical style on the two sides of the Rhine. The very influence of German music was needed by the French rather than a bizarre invention of national traits. The broader art of a Saint-Saëns here shines

in contrast with the brilliant conceits of his younger compatriots, though it cannot be denied that the latter are grounded in classic counterpoint. With other nations the impulse was more natural: the racial song of the Scandinavians, Czechs and other Slavs craved a deliverance as much as the German in the time of Schubert. In France, where music had long flourished, there was no stream of suppressed folk-song.

But the symphony must in the natural course have suffered from the very fulness of its own triumph. We know the Romantic reaction of Schumann, uttered in smaller cyclic forms; in Berlioz is almost a complete abandonment of pure music, devoid of special description. Liszt was one of the mighty figures of the century, with all the external qualities of a master-genius, shaking the stage of Europe with the weight of his personality, and, besides, endowed with a creative power that was not understood in his day. With him the restless tendency resulted in a new form intended to displace the symphony: the symphonic poem, in a single, varied movement, and always on a definite poetic subject. Here was at once a relief and a recess from the classic rigor. Away with sonata form and all the odious code of rules! In the story of the title will lie all the outline of the music.

Yet in this rebellious age—and here is the significance of the form—the symphony did not languish, but blossomed to new and varied flower. Liszt turned back to the symphony from his new-fangled device

for his two greatest works. It has, indeed, been charged that the symphony was accepted by the Romantic masters in the spirit of a challenge. Mendelssohn and even Schumann are not entirely free from such a suspicion. Nevertheless it remains true that all of them confided to the symphony their fairest inspiration. About the middle of the century, at the high point of anti-classical revolt, a wonderful group of symphonies, by Berlioz, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and Liszt, were presented to the world. With the younger Brahms on a returning wave of neo-classicism the form became again distinctively a personal choice. Finally, in the spontaneous utterance of a national spirit on broad lines, as in the later Russian and Finnish examples, with the various phases of surging resolution, of lyric contemplation and of rollicking humor, the symphony has its best sanction in modern times.

To return to the historical view, the course of the symphony during the century cannot be adequately scanned without a glance at the music-drama of Richard Wagner. Until the middle of the century, symphony and opera had moved entirely in separate channels. At most the overture was affected, in temper and detail, by the career of the nobler form.

The restless iconoclasm of a Liszt was now united, in a close personal and poetic league, with the new ideas of Wagner's later drama. Both men adopted the symbolic motif as their main melodic means;

with both mere iteration took the place of development; a brilliant and lurid color-scheme (of orchestration) served to hide the weakness of intrinsic content; a vehement and hysteric manner cast into temporary shade the classic mood of tranquil depth in which alone man's greatest thought is born.

But a still larger view of the whole temper of art in Europe of the later century is needed. We wander here beyond the fine distinctions of musical forms. A new wave of feeling had come over the world that violently affected all processes of thought. And strangely, it was strongest in the land where the great heights of poetry and music had just been reached. Where the high aim of a Beethoven and a Goethe had been proclaimed, arose a Wagner to preach the gospel of brute fate and nature, where love as the involuntary sequence of mechanical device and ended in inevitable death, all overthrowing the heroic idea that teems throughout the classic scores, crowned in a greatest symphony in praise of "Joy."

Such was the intrinsic content of a "Tristan and Isolde" and the whole "Nibelungen-Ring," and it was uttered with a sensuous wealth of sound and a passionate strain of melody that (without special greatness of its own) dazzled and charmed the world in the dramatic setting of mediæval legend. The new harmonic style of Wagner, there is good reason to suppose, was in reality first conceived by Liszt, whose larger works, written about the middle of the cen-

tury, have but lately come to light.* In correspondence with this moral mutiny was the complete revolt from classic art—tradition: melody (at least in theory), the vital quality of musical form and the true process of a coherent thread, were cast to the winds with earlier poetic ideals.

If it were ever true that a single personality could change an opposite course of thought, it must be held that Richard Wagner, in his own striking and decadent career, comes nearest to such a type. But he was clearly prompted and reinforced in his philosophy by other men and tendencies of his time. The realism of a Schopenhauer, which Wagner frankly adopted without its full significance (where primal will finds a redemption in euthanasia), led by a natural course of thought to Nietzsche's dreams of an overman, who tramples on his kind.

In itself this philosophy had been more of a passing phase (even as Schopenhauer is lost in the chain of ethical sages) but for its strange coincidence with the Wagnerian music. The accident of this alliance gave it an overwhelming power in Germany, where it soon threatened to corrupt all the arts, banishing idealism

* The "Dante" Symphony of Liszt was written between 1847 and 1855; the "Faust" Symphony between 1854 and 1857. Wagner finished the text of *Tristan und Isolde* in 1857; the music was not completed until 1859. In 1863 was published the libretto of the *Nibelungen-Ring*. In 1864 Wagner was invited by King Ludwig of Bavaria to complete the work in Munich.

from the land of its special haunts.* The ultimate weakness of the Wagnerian philosophy is that it finds in fatalism an excuse for the surrender of heroic virtue,—not in the spirit of a tragic truth, but in a glorification of the senses; just as in Wagner's final work, the ascetic, sinless type becomes a figure almost of ridicule, devoid of human reality. It is significant that with the revival of a sound art, fraught with resolute aspiration, is imminent a return to an idealistic system of philosophy.

In the musical art even of Germany the triumph was never complete. The famous feud of Brahms and Wagner partisans marked the alignment of the classical and radical traditions. Throughout the second half of the century the banner of a true musical process was upheld; the personal meeting of the youthful Brahms with the declining Schumann is wonderfully significant, viewed as a symbol of this passing of the classic mantle. And the symphonies of Gustav Mahler seem an assurance of present tendencies. The influence of Bach, revived early in the century, grew steadily as a latent leaven.

Nevertheless in the prevailing taste and temper

* In literature this movement is most marked, as may be seen by contrasting the tone of Goethe with that of Sudermann; by noting the decadence from the stories of a Chamisseau and Immermann to those of a Gottfried Keller; from the novels of Freytag to the latest of Frenssen and Arthur Schnitzler; from the poems of Heine to those of Hoffmansthal, author of the text of Strauss' later operas.

Or, contrast merely the two typical dramas of love, Goethe's "Faust" and Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde."

of present German music, in the spirit of the most popular works, as those of Richard Strauss (who seems to have sold his poetic birthright), the aftermath of this wave is felt, and not least in the acclaim of the barren symphonies of a Bruckner. It is well known that Bruckner, who paid a personal homage to Wagner, became a political figure in the partisan dispute, when he was put forth as the antagonist of Brahms in the symphony. His present vogue is due to this association and to his frank adoption of Wagner idiom in his later works, as well as, more generally, to the lowered taste in Germany.

In all this division of musical dialect, in the shattering of the classic tower among the diverse tongues of many peoples, what is to be the harvest? The full symbol of a Babel does not hold for the tonal art. Music is, in its nature, a single language for the world, as its alphabet rests on ideal elements. It has no national limits, like prose or poetry; its home is the whole world; its idiom the blended song of all nations.

In such a view there is less hope in the older than in the newer world. No single, limited song of one nation can in the future achieve a second climax of the art. It is by the actual mingling of them all that the fairest flower and fruit must come. The very absence of one prevailing native song, held a reproach to America, is in reality her strength; for hers is the common heritage of all strains of song. And it may be her destiny to lead in the glorious merging of them all.

CHAPTER II

BERLIOZ AND LISZT

THE path of progress of an art has little to do with mere chronology. For here in early days are bold spirits whose influence is not felt until a whole generation has passed of a former tradition. Nor are these patient pioneers always the best-inspired prophets; the mere fate of slow recognition does not imply a highest genius. A radical innovation may provoke a just and natural resistance. Again, a gradual yielding is not always due to the pure force of truth. Strange and oblique ideas may slowly win a triumph that is not wholly merited and may not prove enduring.

To fully grapple with this mystery, we may still hold to the faith that final victory comes only to pure truth, and yet we may find that imperfect truth will often achieve a slow and late acceptance. The victory may then be viewed in either of two ways: the whole spirit of the age yields to the brilliant allurement, or there is an overweighing balance of true beauty that deserves the prize of permanence. Of such a kind were two principal composers of the symphony: Franz Liszt and Hector Berlioz. Long after they had wrought their greatest works, others had come and

gone in truer line with the first masters, until it seemed these radical spirits had been quite rejected.

Besides the masters of their own day, Schumann and Mendelssohn, a group of minor poets, like Raff and Goetz, appeared, and at last Brahms, the latest great builder of the symphony, all following and crowning the classical tradition.

The slow reception of the larger works of Liszt strangely agrees with the startling resemblance of their manner to the Russian style that captivated a much later age. It seemed as if the spirit of the Hungarian was suddenly revived in a new national group. His humor wonderfully suited the restless and sensational temper of an age that began after his death.

The very harmonies and passionate manner that influence modern audiences evoked a dull indifference in their own day.* They roused the first acclaim when presented in the more popular form of the music-drama. It may well be questioned whether Liszt was not the fountain source of the characteristic harmonies of Wagner's later opera.

Historically considered, that is in their relation to other music preceding and following them, the symphonies of Liszt have striking interest. They are in boldest departure from all other symphonies, save possibly those of Berlioz, and they were prophetic in

* Compare the similarity of the themes of the Faust Symphony of Liszt and of the *Pathétique* of Tschaikowsky in the last chapter of vol. ii, "Symphonies and Their Meaning."

a degree only apparent a half-century later. If the quality of being ahead of his time be proof, instead of a symptom, of genius, then Liszt was in the first rank of masters. The use of significant motif is in both of his symphonies. But almost all the traits that startled and moved the world in Tschaikowsky's symphonies are revealed in this far earlier music: the tempestuous rage of what might be called an hysterical school, and the same poignant beauty of the lyric episodes; the sheer contrast, half trick, half natural, of fierce clangor and dulcet harmonies, all painted with the broad strokes of the orchestral palette. Doubly striking it is how Liszt foreshadowed his later followers and how he has really overshadowed them; not one, down to the most modern tone-painters, has equalled him in depth and breadth of design, in the original power of his tonal symbols. It seems that Liszt will endure as the master-spirit in this reactionary phase of the symphony.

Berlioz is another figure of a bold innovator, whose career seemed a series of failures, yet whose music will not down. His art was centred less upon the old essentials, of characteristic melody and soul-stirring harmonies, than upon the magic strokes of new instrumental grouping,—a graphic rather than a pure musical purpose. And so he is the father not only of the modern orchestra, but of the fashion of the day that revels in new sensations of startling effects, that are spent in portraying the events of a story.

Berlioz was the first of a line of *virtuosi* of the

orchestra, a pioneer in the art of weaving significant strains,—significant, that is, apart from the music. He was seized with the passion of making a pictured design with his orchestral colors. Music, it seems, did not exist for Berlioz except for the telling of a story. His symphony is often rather opera. A symphony, he forgot, is not a musical drama without the scenery. This is just what is not a symphony. It is not the literal story, but the pure musical utterance. Thus Berlioz's "Romeo and Juliet" symphony is in its design more the literal story than is Shakespeare's play. And yet there is ever a serious nobility, a heroic reach in the art of Berlioz, where he stands almost alone among the composers of his race. Here, probably, more than in his pictured stories, lies the secret of his endurance. He was, other than his followers, ever an idealist. And so, when we are on the point of condemning him as a scene-painter, we suddenly come upon a stretch of pure musical beauty, that flowed from the unconscious rapture of true poet. As the bee sucks, so may we cull the stray beauty and the more intimate meaning, despite and aside from this outer intent.

CHAPTER III

BERLIOZ. "ROMEO AND JULIET."

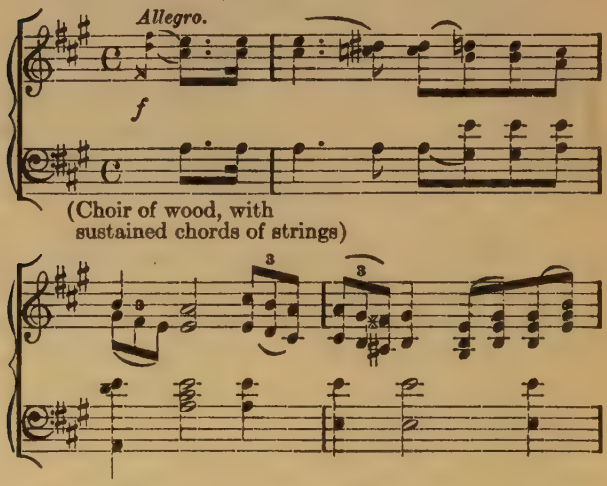
DRAMATIC SYMPHONY

IN the sub-title we see the growing impulse towards graphic music. A "dramatic symphony" is not promising. For, if music is the most subjective expression of the arts, why should its highest form be used to dramatize a drama? Without the aid of scene and actors, that were needed by the original poet, the artisan in absolute tones attempts his own theatric rendering. Clearly this symphony is one of those works of art which within an incongruous form (like certain ancient pictures) affords episodes of imperishable beauty.

Passing by the dramatic episodes that are strung on the thread of the story, we dwell, according to our wont, on the stretches where a pure musical utterance rises to a lofty height of pathos or of rarest fantasy.

In the first scene of the Second Part is the clear intent of a direct tonal expression, and there is a sustained thread of sincere sentiment. The passion of Romeo shines in the purity rather than in the intensity of feeling. The scene has a delicate series of moods, with subtle melodic touches and dramatic surprises of chord and color. The whole seems a reflection of Romeo's humor, the personal (*Allegro*)

theme being the symbol as it roams throughout the various phases,—the sadness of solitude, the feverish thrill of the ball. Into the first phrase of straying violins wanders the personal motive, sadly meditative.

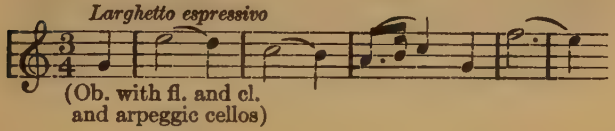


Sweeter dreams now woo the muser, warming into passion, pulsing with a more eager throb of desire, in changed tone and pace. Suddenly in a new quarter amid a quick strum of dance the main motive hurries along. The gay sounds vanish, ominous almost in the distance. The sadness of the lover now sings unrestrained in expressive melody (of oboe), in long swinging pace, while far away rumbles the beat of festive drum.

The song rises in surging curves, but dies away

among the quick festal sounds, where the personal motive is still supreme, chasing its own ardent antics, and plunges headlong into the swirl of dance.

Il Penseroso (in his personal rôle) has glided into a buoyant, rollicking Allegro with joyous answer. Anon the outer revel breaks in with shock almost of terror. And now in climax of joy, through the festal strum across the never-ceasing thread of transformed meditation resound in slowest, broadest swing the



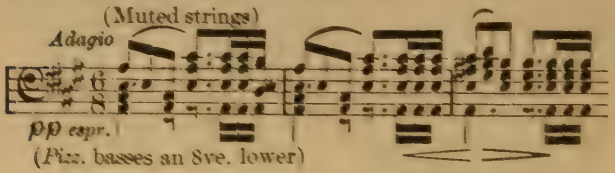
warm tones of the love-song in triumph of bliss.* As the song dies away, the festal sounds fade. Grim meditation returns in double figure,—the slower, heavier pace below. Its shadows are all about as in a fugue of fears, flitting still to the tune of the dance and anon yielding before the gaiety. But through the returning festal ring the fateful motive is still straying in the bass. In the concluding revel the hue of meditation is not entirely banned.

The Shakespearian love-drama thus far seems to be celebrated in the manner of a French romance. After all, the treatment remains scenic in the main; the

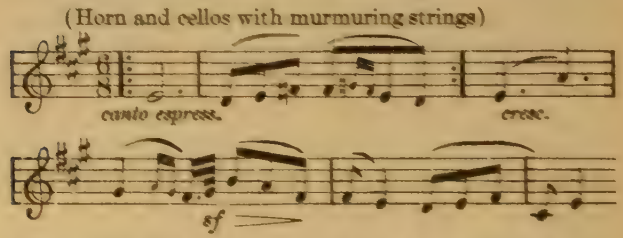
* In unison of the wind. Berlioz has here noted in the score "*Réunion des deux Thémes, du Larghetto et de L'Allegro,*" the second and first of our cited phrases.

feeling is diluted, as it were, not intensified by the music.

The stillness of night and the shimmering moonlight are in the delicate harmonies of (*Allegretto*) strings. A lusty song of departing revellers breaks upon the scene. The former distant sounds of feast are now near and clear in actual words.



There is an intimate charm, a true glamor of love-idyll about the Adagio. On more eager pulse rises a languorous strain of horn and cellos. The flow

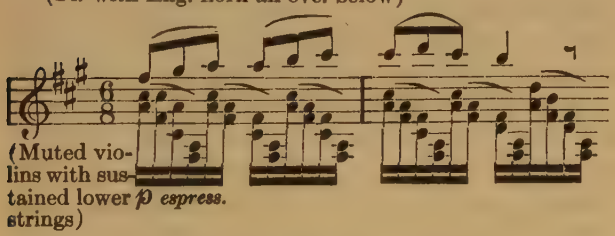


of its passionate phrase reaches the climax of prologue where, the type and essence of the story, it plays about the lovers' first meeting. As lower strings hum the burden of desire, higher wood add touches of ecstasy, the melting violins sing the wooing song, and all break into an overwhelming rapture,

as though transfigured in the brightness of its own vehemence, in midst of a trembling mystery.

The restless spirit starts (*allegro agitato*) in fearsome agitation on quick nervous throb of melody; below, violas sing a soothing answer; there is a clear dialogue of wistful lovers.

Instead of the classic form of several verses led by one dominant melody to varied paths and views, here almost in reverse we seem to fall from a broader lyric mood to a single note of sad yearning that



grows out of the several strains. Upon such a motive a new melody sings. The delicate bliss of early love is all about, and in the lingering close the timid ecstasies of wooing phrase. But this is a mere prelude to the more highly stressed, vehement song of love that follows on the same yearning motive. Here is the crowning, summing phase of the whole poem, without a return to earlier melody save that, by significant touch, it ends in the same expressive turn as the former languorous song.

The first melody does not reappear, is thus a kind

of background of the scene. The whole is a dramatic lyric that moves from broader tune to a reiterated note of sad desire, driven to a splendid height of crowned bliss. The turbulence of early love is there; pure ardor in flaming tongues of ecstasy; the quick turn of mood and the note of omen of the original poem; the violence of early love and the fate that hangs over.

Berlioz has drawn the subject of his Scherzo from Mercutio's speech in Scene 4 of the First Act of Shakespeare's tragedy. He has entitled it "Queen Mab, or the Fairy of Dreams," and clearly intends to portray the airy flight of Mab and her fairies. But we must doubt whether this, the musical gem of the symphony, has a plan that is purely graphic,—rather does it seem to soar beyond those concrete limits to an utterance of the sense of dreams themselves in the spirit of Mercutio's conclusion:

> " . . . I talk of dreams
> Which are the children of an idle brain,
> Begot of nothing but vain fantasy,
> Which is as thin of substance as the air; "

And we may add, as elusive for the enchanted mind to hold are these pranks and brilliant parade of tonal sprites. It stands one of the masterpieces of program-music, in equal balance of pure beauty with the graphic plan.

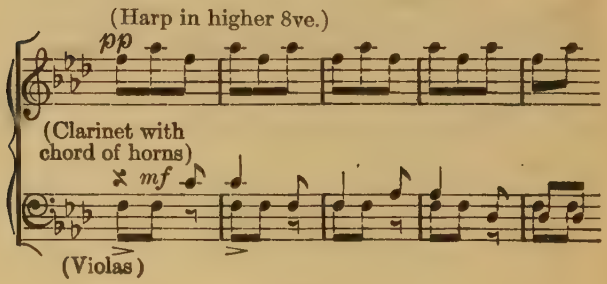
Imps they are, these flitting figures, almost insects with a personality. In pace there is a division,

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

English horn) beneath an ariel harmony (of overtones), while a quicker trip begins below of the same figure. And in the midst is a strange concert of low dancing strings with highest tones of harp,—strange mating of flitting sprites.

We are suddenly back in the first, skipping dance, ever faster and brighter in dazzling group of lesser figures. And here is the golden note of fairy-land,—the horn in soft cheery hunter's lay, answered by echoing voices. For a moment the call is tipped with touch of sadness, then rings out brightly in a new quarter. Beautiful it sings between the quick phrases, with a certain shock of change, and there is the terror of a sudden low rumbling and the thrill of new murmuring sounds with soft beat of drum that hails the gathering fairies. There is a sudden clarion burst of the whole chorus, with clash of drum and clang of brass, and sudden pause, then faintest echoes of higher voices.

A new figure now dances a joyous measure to the tinkling of harp and the sparkling strokes of high



cymbals and long blown tone of horns. The very essence it is of fairy life. And so the joy is not unmixed with just a touch of awe. Amidst the whole tintinnabulation is a soft resonant echo of horns below, like an image in a lake. The air hangs heavy with dim romance until the sudden return to first fairy verse in sounds almost human. Once more come the frightening pauses.

The end is in a great crash of sweet sound—a glad awakening to day and to reality.

CHAPTER IV

A SYMPHONY TO DANTE'S "DIVINA COMMEDIA"

FOR ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS OF SOPRANOS AND ALTOS

THE "Divina Commedia" may be said in a broad view to belong to the great design by which Christian teaching was brought into relation with earlier pagan lore. The subject commands all the interest of the epics of Virgil and of Milton. It must be called the greatest Christian poem of all times, and the breadth of its appeal and of its art specially attest the age in which it was written, when classic pagan poetry broke upon the world like a great treasure-trove.

The subject was an ideal one in Dante's time,—a theme convincing and contenting to all the world, and, besides, akin to the essence of pagan poetry. The poet was needed to celebrate all the phases of its meaning and beauty. This is true of all flashes of evolutionary truth. As in the ancient epics, an idea once real to the world may be enshrined in a design of immortal art.

To-day we are perhaps in too agnostic a state to be absorbed by such a contemplation. The subject in a narrower sense is true at most to those who will to cherish the solace of a salvation which they

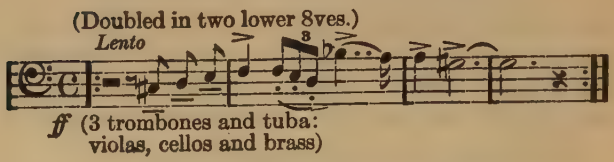
have not fully apprehended. And so the Liszt symphony of the nineteenth century is not a complete reflection of the Dante poem of the fourteenth. It becomes for the devout believer almost a kind of church-liturgy,—a Mass by the Abbé Liszt.

Rare qualities there undoubtedly are in the music: a reality of passion; a certain simplicity of plan; the sensuous beauty of melodic and harmonic touches. But a greatness in the whole musical expression that may approach the grandeur of the poem, could only come in a suggestion of symbolic truth; and here the composer seems to fail by a too close clinging to ecclesiastic ritual. Yet in the agony of remorse, rising from hopeless woe to a chastened worship of the light, is a strain of inner truth that will leave the work for a long time a hold on human interest.

Novel is the writing of words in the score, as if they are to be sung by the instruments,—all sheer aside from the original purpose of the form. Page after page has its precise text; we hear the shrieks of the damned, the dread inscription of the infernal portals; the sad lament of lovers; the final song of praise of the redeemed. A kind of picture-book music has our symphony become. The *leit-motif* has crept into the high form of absolute tones to make it as definite and dramatic as any opera.

I. INFERNO

The legend of the portal is proclaimed at the outset in a rising phrase (of the low brass and strings)

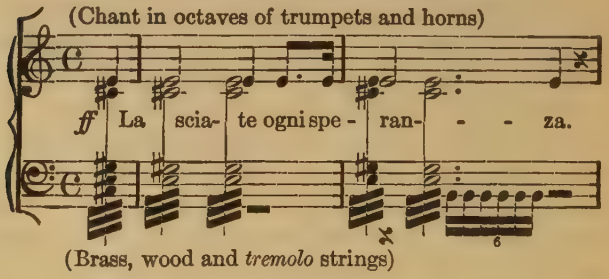


Per me si va nella cit-ta do-lente;
Per me si va nell' eterno dolore;

and in still higher chant—

Per me si va tra la perduta gente.

Then, in antiphonal blast of horns and trumpets sounds the fatal doom in grim monotone (in descending harmony of trembling strings):



Lasciate ogni speranza mi ch' entrate! *

A tumult on a sigh (from the first phrase) rises again and again in gusts. In a violent paroxysm we hear the doom of the monotone in lowest horns.

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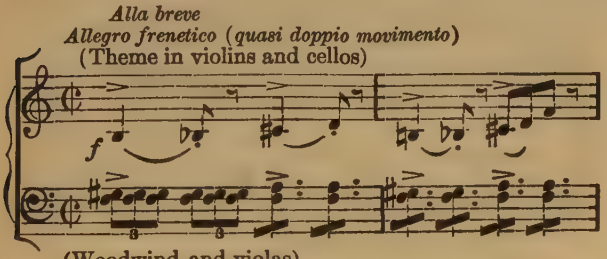
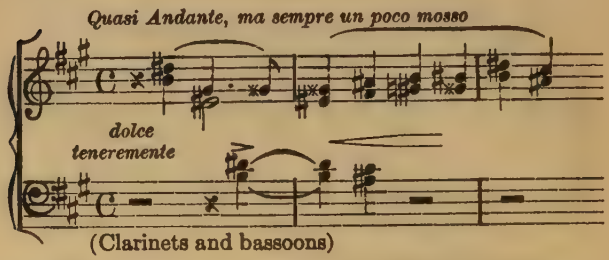
* "Through me the way is to the city dolent;
Through me the way is to eternal dole;
Through me the way among the people lost.
All hope abandon, ye who enter in!"
—*From Longfellow's translation.*

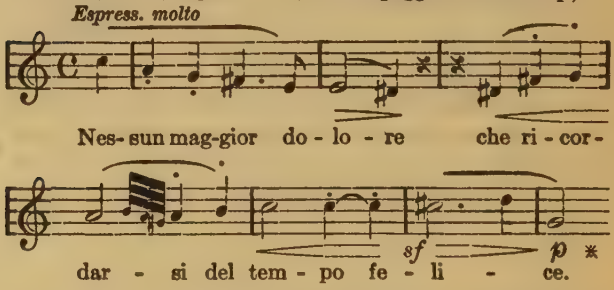
The fateful phrases are ringing about, while pervading all is the hope-destroying blast of the brass. But the storm-centre is the sighing motive which now enters on a quicker spur of passionate stride (*Allegro frenetico, quasi doppio movimento*). In its winding



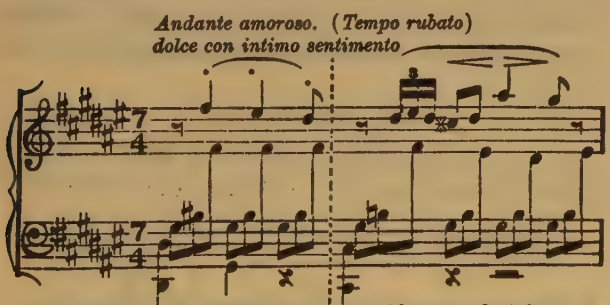
sequences it sings a new song in more regular pace. The tempest grows wilder and more masterful, still following the lines of the song, rising to towering height. And now in the strains, slow and faster, sounds the sigh above and below, all in a madrigal of woe. The whole is surmounted by a big descending phrase, articulate almost in its grim dogma, as it runs into the line of the first legend in full tumult of gloom. It is followed by the doom slowly proclaimed in thundering tones of the brass, in midst of a tempest of surging harmonies. Only it is all more fully and poignantly stressed than before, with long, resonant echoes of the stentorian tones of lowest brass.

Suddenly we are in the dulcet mood (*Quasi Andante, ma sempre un poco mosso*) 'mid light waving strings and rich swirling harp, and soothing tones

of flutes and muted horns. Then, as all other voices are hushed, the clarinet sings a strain that ends in lowest notes of expressive grief (*Recit., expressivo dolente*)—where we can almost hear the words. It is answered by a sweet plaint of other wood, in

questioning accents, followed by the returning waves of strings and harp, and another phrase of the lament; and now to the pulsing chords of the harp the mellow English horn does sing (at least in the score) the words,—the central text of all:


Poco agitato (English horn, with arpeggic flow of harp)
Espress. molto
Nes- sun mag-gior do - lo - re che ri - cor-
sf
p
dar - si del tem - po fe - li - ce.

* "There is no greater sorrow than to be mindful of the happy time in misery."—*From Longfellow's translation.*

Other voices join the leader. As the lower reed start the refrain, the higher enter in pursuit, and then the two groups sing a melodic chase. But the whole phrase is a mere foil to the pure melody of the former plaint that now returns in lower strings. And all so far is as a herald to the passage of intimate sentiment (*Andante amoroso*) that lies a lyric gem in the heart of the symphony. The melting strain is stressed in tenderness by the languor of harmonies, the delicate design of elusive rhythm and the appealing whisper of harp and two violins,—tipped by the touch of mellow wood.

(Melody in first violins; arpeggios of harp and violas; lower woodwind and strings)

With the rising passion, as the refrain spreads in wider sequences, the choirs of wood and strings are drawn into the song, one group answering the other in a true love duet.

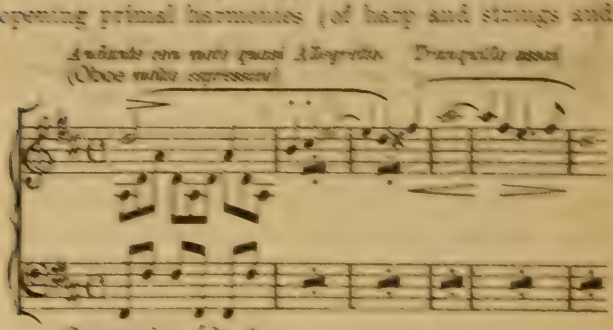
The last cadence falls into the old sigh as the dread oracle sounds once more the knell of hope. Swirling strings bring us to a new scene of the world of shades. In the furious, frenetic pace of yore (*Tempo primo,*

Allegro, alla breve) there is a new sullen note, a dull martial trip of drums with demonic growls (on the lowest wood). The sigh is there, but perverted in humor. A chorus of blasphemous mockery is stressed by strident accents of lower wood and strings.*

Gradually we fall into the former frenzied song, amid the demon exclamations, until we have plunged back into the nightmare of gnomes. Instead of the big descending phrase we sink into lower depths of gloom, wilder than ever, on the first tripping motive. As the sighing strain resounds below in the midst of a chorus of demon shrieks, there enters the chant of inexorable fate. Mockery yields to a tinge of pathos, a sense almost of majestic resignation, an apotheosis of grief.

II. PURGATORIO

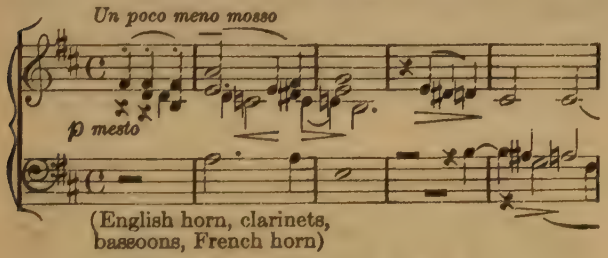
A state of tranquility, almost of bliss, is in the opening primal harmonies (of harp and strings and


Andante con moto quasi Allegretto
(Oboe solo espressivo)
Tranquillo assai
Sempre piano e legato
(Full arpeggio harp and muted strings)

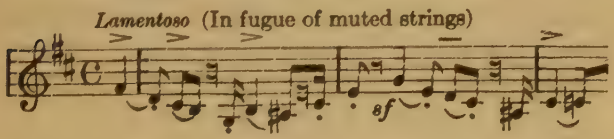
* We are again assisted by the interpreting words in the score.

soft horns). Indeed, what else could be the mood of relief from the horrors of hell? And lo! the reed strikes a pure limpid song echoed in turn by other voices, beneath a rich spray of heavenly harmonies.

This all recurs in higher shift of tone. A wistful phrase (*piu lento,* in low strings) seems to breathe



a spoken sob. Then, as in voices of a hymn, chants a more formal liturgy of plaint where the phrase is almost lost in the lowest voice. It is all but articulate, with a sense of the old sigh; but it is in a calmer spirit, though anon bursting with passionate grief (*lagrimoso*).



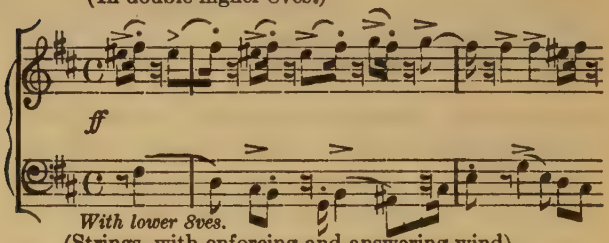
And now in the same vein, of the same fibre, a fugue begins of lament, first in muted strings.

It is the line of sad expressive recitative that heralded the plaint and the love-scene. There is here the full charm of fugue: a rhythmic quality of single

theme, the choir of concerted dirge in independent and interdependent paths, and with every note of integral melody. There is the beauty of pure tonal architecture blended with the personal significance of the human (and divine) tragedy.

The fugue begins in muted strings, like plaintive human voices, though wood and brass here and there light up the phrases. Now the full bass of horns and wood strikes the descending course of theme, while higher strings and wood soar in rising stress of (sighing) grief.

(In double higher 8ves.)



(Strings, with enforcing and answering wind)

A hymnal verse of the theme enters in the wood answered by impetuous strings on a coursing phrase. The antiphonal song rises with eager stress of themal attack. A quieter elegy leads to another burst, the motive above, the insistent sigh below. The climax of fugue returns to the heroic main plaint below, with sighing answers above, all the voices of wood and brass enforcing the strings.

Then the fugue turns to a transfigured phase; the theme rings triumphant retorts in golden horns and

in a masterful unison of the wood; the wild answer runs joyfully in lower strings, while the higher are strumming like celestial harps. The whole is transformed to a big song of praise ever in higher harmonies. The theme flows on in ever varying thread, amidst the acclaiming tumult.

But the heavenly heights are not reached by a single leap. Once more we sink to sombre depths not of the old rejection, but of a chastened, wistful wonderment. The former plaintive chant returns, in slower, contained pace, broken by phrases of mourning recitative, with the old sigh. And a former brief strain of simple aspiration is supported by angelic harps. In gentle ascent we are wafted to the acclaim of heavenly (treble) voices in the *Magnificat.* A wonderful utterance, throughout the scene of Purgatory, there is of a chastened, almost spiritual grief for the sin that cannot be undone, though it is not past pardon.

The bold design of the final Praise of the Almighty was evidently conceived in the main as a service. An actual depiction, or a direct expression (such as is attempted in the prologue of Boito's Mefistofele) was thereby avoided. The Holy of Holies is screened from view by a priestly ceremony,—by the mask of conventional religion. Else we must take the composer's personal conception of such a climax as that of an orthodox Churchman. And then the whole work, with all its pathos and humanity, falls to the level of liturgy.

The words of invisible angel-chorus are those of the blessed maid trusting in God her savior, on a theme for which we are prepared by preluding choirs of harps, wood and strings. It is sung on an ancient Church tone that in its height approaches the mode of secular song. With all the power of broad rhythm, and fulness of harmony and volume, the feeling is of conventional worship. With all the purity of shimmering harmonies the form is ecclesiastical in its main lines and depends upon liturgic symbols for its effect and upon the faith of the listener for its appeal.

At the end of the hymn, on the entering *Hosanna!* and *Hallelujah!* we catch the sacred symbol (of seven tones) in the path of the two vocal parts, the lower descending, the higher ascending as on heavenly scale. In the second, optional ending the figure is completed, as the bass descends through the seven whole tones and the treble (of voices and instruments) rises as before to end in overpowering *Hallelujah!* The style is close knit with the earlier music. A pervading motive is the former brief phrase of aspiration; upon it the angelic groups seem to wing their flight between verses of praise. By a wonderful touch the sigh, that appeared inverted in the plaintive chant of the *Purgatorio,* is finally glorified as the motive of the bass to the words of exultation.

CHAPTER V

THE SYMPHONIC POEMS OF LISZT

LISZT was clearly a follower of Berlioz in the abandon to a pictorial aim, in the revolt from pure musical form, and in the mastery of orchestral color. If we feel in almost all his works a charming translation of story in the tones, we also miss the higher empyræan of pure fancy, unlimited by halting labels. It is a descent into pleasant, rich pastures from the cosmic view of the lofty mountain. Yet it must be yielded that Liszt's program-music was of the higher kind that dwells in symbols rather than in concrete details. It was a graphic plan of symbolization that led Liszt to choose the subjects of his symphonic poems (such as the "Préludes" and the "Ideals") and to prefer the poetic scheme of Hugo's "Mazeppa" to the finer verse of a Byron. Though not without literal touches, Liszt perceived that his subjects must have a symbolic quality.

Nevertheless this pictorial style led to a revolution in the very nature of musical creation and to a new form which was seemingly intended to usurp the place of the symphony. It is clear that the symphonic poem is in very essence opposed to the symphony. The genius of the symphony lies in the overwhelming breadth and intensity of its expression

without the aid of words. Vainly decried by a later age of shallower perception, it achieved this Promethean stroke by the very magic of the design. At one bound thus arose in the youngest art a form higher than any other of human device,—higher than the epic, the drama, or the cathedral.

Bowing to an impatient demand for verbal meaning, Liszt invented the Symphonic Poem, in which the classic cogency yielded to the loose thread of a musical sketch in one movement, slavishly following the sequence of some literary subject. He abandoned sheer tonal fancy, surrendering the magic potency of pure music, fully expressive within its own design far beyond the literal scheme.*

The symphonic poems of Liszt, in so far as his intent was in destructive reaction to the classic process, were precisely in line with the drama of Wagner. The common revolt completely failed. The higher, the real music is ever of that pure tonal design where the fancy is not leashed to some external scheme. Liszt himself grew to perceive the inadequacy of the new device when he returned to the symphony for his greatest orchestral expression, though even here he never escaped from the thrall of a literal subject.

And strangely, in point of actual music, we cannot fail to find an emptier, a more grandiose manner in all these symphonic poems than in the two sym-

* Mendelssohn with perfect insight once declared,—"Notes have as definite a meaning as words, perhaps even a more definite one."

phonies. It seems as if an unconscious sense of the greater nobility of the classic medium drove Liszt to a far higher inspiration in his melodic themes.

Yet we cannot deny the brilliant, dazzling strokes, and the luscious harmonies. It was all a new manner, and alone the novelty is welcome, not to speak of the broad sweep of facile melody, and the sparkling thrills.

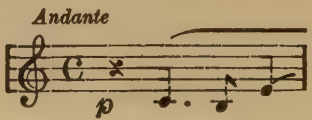
LES PRÉLUDES

This work has a preface by the composer, who refers in a footnote to the "*Méditations poétiques*" of Lamartine.

"What else is our life than a series of preludes to that unknown song of which the first solemn note is struck by death? Love is the morning glow of every heart; but in what human career have not the first ecstasies of bliss been broken by the storm, whose cruel breath destroys fond illusions, and blasts the sacred shrine with the bolt of lightning. And what soul, sorely wounded, does not, emerging from the tempest, seek to indulge its memories in the calm of country life? Nevertheless, man will not resign himself for long to the soothing charm of quiet nature, and when the trumpet sounds the signal of alarm, he runs to the perilous post, whatever be the cause that calls him to the ranks of war,—that he may find in combat the full consciousness of himself and the command of all his powers."

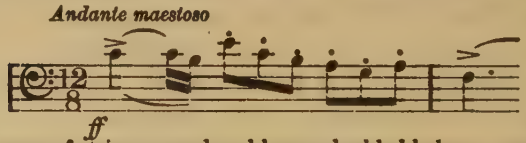
How far is the music literally graphic? We can-

not look for the "unknown song" in definite sounds. That would defeat, not describe, its character. But the first solemn notes, are not these the solemn rising phrase that reappears in varying rhythm and pace all about the beginning and, indeed, the whole course

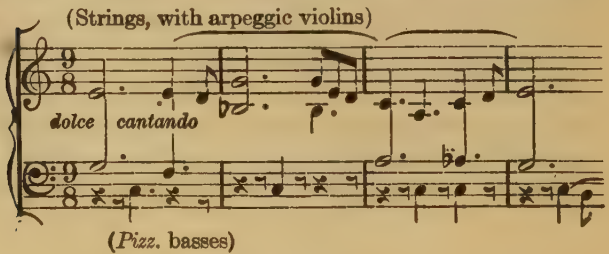


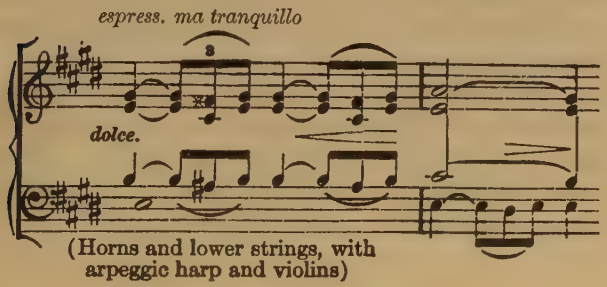
(Strings, doubled in two lower 8ves.)

of the music. Just these three notes abound in the mystic first "prelude," and they are the core of the great swinging tune of the Andante maestoso, the beginning and main pulse of the unknown song.



(Basses of strings, wood and brass, doubled below; arpeggic harmonies in upper strings; sustained higher wood)

Now (*dolce cantando*) is a softer guise of the phrase. For death and birth, the two portals, are like

elements. Even here the former separate motive sounds, and so in the further turn of the song (*expressivo dolente*) on new thread.

The melody that sings (*expressivo ma tranquillo*) may well stand for "love, the glow of dawn in every heart." Before the storm, both great motives (of love and death) sound together very beautifully, as in

Tennyson's poem. The storm that blasts the romance begins with the same fateful phrase. It is all about, even inverted, and at the crisis it sings with the fervor of full-blown song. At the lull the soft guise reappears, faintly, like a sweet memory.

The Allegretto pastorale is clear from the preface. After we are lulled, soothed, caressed and all but entranced by these new impersonal sounds, then, as if the sovereign for whom all else were preparing, the song of love seeks its recapitulated verse. Indeed here is the real full song. Is it that in the memory lies the reality, or at least the realization?

Out of the dream of love rouses the sudden alarm of brass (*Allegro marziale animato*), with a new war-tune fashioned of the former soft disguised motive. The air of fate still hangs heavy over all. In spirited retorts the martial madrigal proceeds, but it is not all mere war and courage. Through the clash of strife break in the former songs, the love-theme in triumph and the first expressive strain in tempestuous joy. Last of all the fateful original motto rings once more in serene, contained majesty.

On the whole, even with so well-defined a program, and with a full play of memory, we cannot be quite sure of a fixed association of the motive. It is better to view the melodic episodes as subjective phases, arising from the tenor of the poem.

TASSO

Liszt's "Tasso" is probably the earliest celebration, in pure tonal form, of the plot of man's suffering and redemption, that has been so much followed that it may be called the type of the modern symphony.* In this direct influence the "Tasso" poem has been the most striking of all of Liszt's creations.

* We may mention such other works of Liszt as "Mazeppa" and the "Faust" Symphony; the third symphony of Saint-Saëns; Strauss' tone poem "Death and Transfiguration"; Volbach's symphony, besides other symphonies such as a work by Carl Pohlig. We may count here, too, the Heldenlied by Dvôrák, and Strauss' Heldenleben (see Vol. II).

The following preface of the composer accompanies the score:

"In the year 1849 the one hundredth anniversary of Goethe's birth was celebrated throughout Germany; the theatre in Weimar, where we were at the time, marked the 28th of August by a performance of 'Tasso.'

"The tragic fate of the unfortunate bard served as a text for the two greatest poets produced by Germany and England in the last century: Goethe and Byron. Upon Goethe was bestowed the most brilliant of mortal careers; while Byron's advantages of birth and of fortune were balanced by keenest suffering. We must confess that when bidden, in 1849, to write an overture for Goethe's drama, we were more immediately inspired by Byron's reverential pity for the shades of the great man, which he invoked, than by the work of the German poet. Nevertheless Byron, in his picture of Tasso in prison, was unable to add to the remembrance of his poignant grief, so nobly and eloquently uttered in his 'Lament,' the thought of the 'Triumph' that a tardy justice gave to the chivalrous author of 'Jerusalem Delivered.' We have sought to mark this dual idea in the very title of our work, and we should be glad to have succeeded in pointing this great contrast,—the genius who was misjudged during his life, surrounded, after death, with a halo that destroyed his enemies. Tasso loved and suffered at Ferrara; he was avenged at Rome; his glory still lives in the folk-songs of Venice. These three elements are inseparable from his immortal memory. To represent them in music, we first called up his august spirit as he still haunts the waters of Venice. Then we beheld his proud and melancholy figure as he passed through the festivals of Ferrara where he had produced his master-works. Finally we followed him to Rome, the eternal city, that offered him the crown and glorified in him the martyr and the poet.

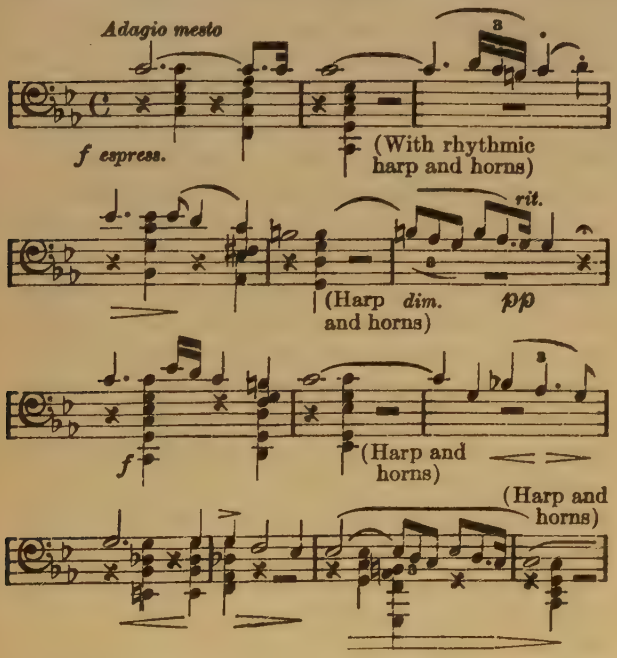
"*Lamento e Trionfo:* Such are the opposite poles of the destiny of poets, of whom it has been justly said that if their lives are sometimes burdened with a curse, a blessing is never wanting over their grave. For the sake not merely of authority, but the distinction of historical truth, we put our idea into realistic form in taking for the theme of our musical poem the motive with which we have heard the gondoliers of Venice sing over the waters the lines of Tasso, and utter them three centuries after the poet:

"'Canto l'armi pietose e'l Capitano
Che'l gran Sepolcro liberò di Christo!'

"The motive is in itself plaintive; it has a sustained sigh, a monotone of grief. But the gondoliers give it a special quality by prolonging certain tones—as when distant rays of brilliant light are reflected on the waves. This song had deeply impressed us long ago. It was impossible to treat of Tasso without taking, as it were, as text for our thoughts, this homage rendered by the nation to the genius whose love and loyalty were ill merited by the court of Ferrara. The Venetian melody breathes so sharp a melancholy, such hopeless sadness, that it suffices in itself to reveal the secret of Tasso's grief. It lent itself, like the poet's imagination, to the world's brilliant illusions, to the smooth and false coquetry of those smiles that brought the dreadful catastrophe in their train, for which there seemed to be no compensation in this world. And yet upon the Capitol the poet was clothed with a mantle of purer and more brilliant purple than that of Alphonse."

With the help of the composer's plot, the intent of the music becomes clear, to the dot almost of the note. The whole poem is an exposition of the one sovereign melody, where we may feel a kindred trait of Hungarian song, above all in the cadences, that

must have stirred Liszt's patriot heart. Nay,—beginning as it does with melancholy stress of the phrase of cadence and the straying into full rhythmitic exultation, it seems (in strange guise) another



of Liszt's Hungarian rhapsodies,—that were, perhaps, the greatest of all he achieved, where his unpremeditated frenzy revelled in purest folk-rhythm and tune. The natural division of the Hungarian dance, with the sad *Lassu* and the glad *Friss,* is here clear in

order and recurrence. The Magyar seems to the manner born in both parts of the melody.*

In the accents of the motive of cadence (*Lento*) we feel the secret grief of the hero, that turns *Allegro strepitoso,* in quicker pace to fierce revolt.

In full tragic majesty the noble theme enters, in panoply of woe. In the further flow, as in the beginning, is a brief chromatic strain and a sigh of descending tone that do not lie in the obvious song, that are drawn by the subjective poet from the latent fibre. Here is the modern Liszt, of rapture and anguish, in manner and in mood that proved so potent a model with a later generation.†

The verse ends in a prolonged threnody, then turns to a firm, serenely grave burst of the song in major, *Meno Adagio,* with just a hint of martial grandeur. For once, or the nonce, we seem to see the hero-poet acclaimed. In a middle episode the motive of the cadence sings expressively with delicate harmonies, rising to full-blown exaltation. We may see here an actual brief celebration, such as Tasso did receive on entering Ferrara.

And here is a sudden fanciful turn. A festive dance strikes a tuneful trip,—a menuet it surely is, with all the ancient festal charm, vibrant with tune and spring, though still we do not escape the source

* A common Oriental element in Hungarian and Venetian music has been observed. See Kretschmar's note to Liszt's "Tasso" (Breitkopf & Haertel).

† See note in the final chapter of Volume II.

of the first pervading theme. Out of the midst of the dance sings slyly an enchanting phrase, much like a secret love-romance. Now to the light continuing dance is joined a strange companion,—the heroic melody in its earlier majestic pace. Is it the poet in serious meditation at the feast apart from the joyous abandon, or do we see him laurel-crowned, a centre of the festival, while the gay dancers flit about him in homage?

More and more brilliant grows the scene, though ever with the dominant grave figure. With sudden stroke as of fatal blast returns the earlier fierce burst of revolt, rising to agitation of the former lament, blending both moods and motives, and ending with a broader stress of the first tragic motto.

Now, *Allegro con brio,* with herald calls of the brass and fanfare of running strings (drawn from the personal theme), in bright major the whole song bursts forth in brilliant gladness. At the height the exaltation finds vent in a peal of simple melody. The "triumph" follows in broadest, royal pace of the main song in the wind, while the strings are madly coursing and the basses reiterate the transformed motive of the cadence. The end is a revel of jubilation.

MAZEPPA

The Mazeppa music is based upon Victor Hugo's poem, in turn founded upon Byron's verse, with an added stirring touch of allegory.

The verses of Hugo first tell how the victim is tied to the fiery steed, how—

"He turns in the toils like a serpent in madness,
And . . . his tormentors have feasted in gladness
Upon his despair.

. . . . . .

They fly.—Empty space is behind and before them

. . . . . .

The horse, neither bridle nor bit on him feeling,
Flies ever; red drops o'er the victim are stealing:
His whole body bleeds.
Alas! to the wild horses foaming and champing
That followed with mane erect, neighing and stamping,
A crow-flight succeeds.
The raven, the horn'd owl with eyes round and hollow,
The osprey and eagle from battle-field follow,
Though daylight alarm.

. . . . . .

Then after three days of this course wild and frantic,
Through rivers of ice, plains and forests gigantic,
The horse sinks and dies;

. . . . . .

Yet mark! That poor sufferer, gasping and moaning,
To-morrow the Cossacks of Ukraine atoning,
Will hail as their King;

. . . . . .

To royal Mazeppa the hordes Asiatic
Will show their devotion in fervor ecstatic,
And low to earth bow."

In his splendid epilogue the poet likens the hero to the mortal on whom the god has set his mark. He sees himself bound living to the fatal course of genius, the fiery steed.

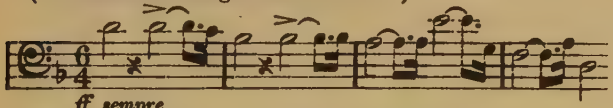
"Away from the world—from all real existence
He is borne upwards, despite his resistance
On feet of steel.
He is taken o'er deserts, o'er mountains in legions,
Grey-hoary, thro' oceans, and into the regions
Far over the clouds;
A thousand base spirits his progress unshaken
Arouses, press round him and stare as they waken,
In insolent crowds

. . . . . .

He cries out with terror, in agony grasping,
Yet ever the name of his Pegasus clasping,
They heavenward spring;
Each leap that he takes with fresh woe is attended;
He totters—falls lifeless—the struggle is ended—
And rises as King! *

The original *Allegro agitato* in broad 6/4 time (aptly suggestive of the unbridled motion) grows

(In brass and strings with lower 8ve.)

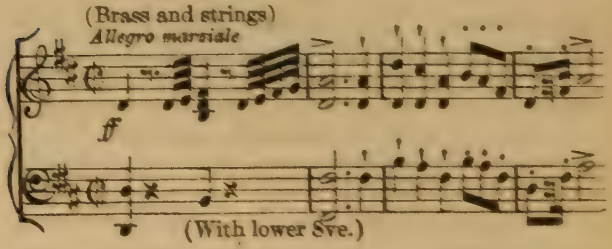


(With constant clattering higher strings and chord of low wind on the middle beat)

more rapid into an *alla breve* pace (in two beats), with dazzling maze of lesser rhythms. Throughout the work a song of primeval strain prevails. Here and there a tinge of foreshadowing pain appears, as the song sounds on high, *espressivo dolente*. But the

* The English verses are taken for the most part from the translation of F. Corder.

fervor and fury of movement is undiminished. The brief touch of pathos soon merges in the general heroic mood. Later, the whole motion ceases, "the horse sinks and dies," and now an interlude sings a pure plaint (in the strain of the main motive). Then, *Allegro*, the martial note clangs in stirring trumpet and breaks into formal song of war, *Allegro marziale*.



In the wake of this song, with a relentless trip and tramp of warrior hordes, is the real clash and jingle of the battle, where the sparkling thrill of strings and the saucy counter theme are strong elements in the stirring beauty.

There is a touch here of the old Goth, or rather the Hun, nearer akin to the composer's race.

At the height rings out the main tune of yore, transformed in triumphant majesty.

The musical design embraces various phases. First is the clear rhythmic sense of the ride. We think of other instances like Schubert's "Erl-King" or the ghostly ride in Raff's "Lenore" Symphony.

The degree of vivid description must vary, not

only with the composer, but with the hearer. The greatest masters have yielded to the variety of the actual graphic touch. And, too, there are always interpreters who find it, even if it was never intended. Thus it is common to hear at the very beginning of the "Mazeppa" music the cry that goes up as starts the flight.

We are of course entitled, if we prefer, to feel the poetry rather than the picture. Finally it is probably true that such a poetic design is not marred merely because there is here or there a trick of onomatopœia; if it is permitted in poetry, why not in music? It may be no more than a spur to the fancy, a quick conjuring of the association.

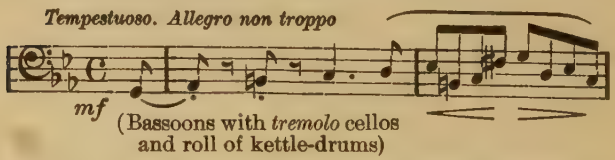
HUNNENSCHLACHT—"THE BATTLE OF THE HUNS"

Liszt's symphonic poem, "Hunnenschlacht," one of the last of his works in this form, completed in 1857, was directly inspired by the picture of the German painter, Wilhelm Kaulbach, which represents the legend of the aerial battle between the spirits of the Romans and Huns who had fallen outside of the walls of Rome.*

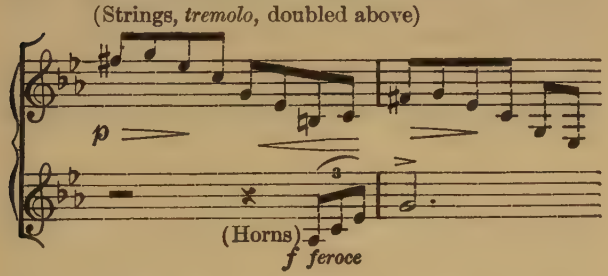
* A description of the picture is cited by Lawrence Gilman in his book, "Stories of Symphonic Music," as follows:

"According to a legend, the combatants were so exasperated that the slain rose during the night and fought in the air. Rome, which is seen in the background, is said to have been the scene of this event. Above, borne on a shield,

The evidence of the composer's intent is embodied in a letter written in 1857 to the wife of the painter, which accompanied the manuscript of an arrangement of the music for two pianos. In the letter Liszt speaks of "the meteoric and solar light which I have borrowed from the painting, and which at the Finale I have formed into one whole by the gradual working up of the Catholic *choral* 'Crux fidelis,' and the meteoric sparks blended therewith." He continues: "As I have already intimated to Kaulbach, in Munich, I was led by the musical demands of the material to give proportionately more place to the solar light of Christianity, personified in the Catholic *choral* . . . than appears to be the case in the glorious painting, in order to win and pregnantly represent the conclusion of the Victory of the Cross, with which I both as a Catholic and as a man could not dispense."

The work begins *tempestuoso* (*allegro non troppo*), with a nervous theme over soft rolling drums and

is Attila, with a scourge in his hand; opposite him Theodoric, King of the Visigoths. The foreground is a battlefield, strewn with corpses, which are seen to be gradually reviving, rising up and rallying, while among them wander wailing and lamenting women."

trembling low strings, that is taken up as in fugue by successive groups and carried to a height where enters a fierce call of the horns. The cries of battle spread with increasing din and gathering speed. At the first climax the whole motion has a new energy, as the strings in feverish chase attack the quickened motive with violent stress. Later, though the motion has not lessened, the theme has returned to a semblance of its former pace, and again the cries of battle (in brass and wood) sound across its path.

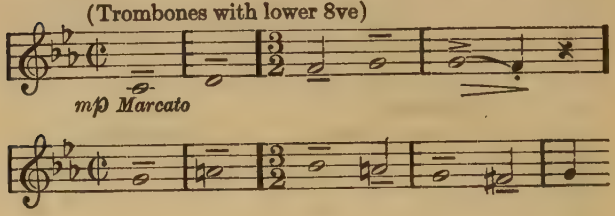


In the hush of the storm the full-blown call to arms is heard in lowest, funereal tones. Of a sudden, though the speed is the same, the pace changes with a certain terror as of a cavalry attack. Presently amid the clattering tramp sounds the big hymn,—in the ancient rhythm that moves strangely out of the rut of even time.*

A single line of the hymn is followed by a refrain of the battle-call, and by the charge of horse that

* Quoted on the following page.

brings back the hymn, in high pitch of trumpets. And so recur the former phases of battle,—really of threat and preparation. For now begins the serious fray in one long gathering of speed and power. The first theme here grows to full melodic song, with extended answer, led by strepitous band of lower reed over a heavy clatter of strings. We are in a



maze of furious charges and cries, till the shrill trumpet and the stentorian trombone strike the full call in antiphonal song. The tempest increases with a renewed charge of the strings, and now the more distant calls have a slower sweep. Later the battle song is in the basses,—again in clashing basses and trebles; nearer strike the broad sweeping calls.

Suddenly over the hushed motion in soothing harmonies sings the hymn in pious choir of all the brass. Then the gathering speed and volume is merged in a majestic tread as of ordered array (*Maestoso assai; Andante*); a brief spirited prelude of martial motives is answered by the soft religious strains of the organ on the line of the hymn:

"Crux fidelis, inter omnes
Arbor una nobilis,
Nulla silva talem profert
Fronde, flore, germine.
Dulce lignum, dulces clavos,
Dulce pondus sustinet." *

As in solemn liturgy come the answering phrases of the organ and the big chorus in martial tread. As the hymn winds its further course, violins entwine about the harmonies. The last line ends in expressive strain and warm line of new major tone,—echoed in interluding organ and violins.

Suddenly a strict, solemn tread, with sharp stress of violins, brings a new song of the *choral*. Strings alone play here "with pious expression"; gradually reeds add support and ornament. A lingering phrase ascends on celestial harmonies. With a stern shock the plain hymn strikes in the reed, against a rapid course of strings, with fateful tread. In interlude sound the battle-cries of yore. Again the hymn ends in the expressive cadence, though now it grows to a height of power.

Here a former figure (the first motive of the battle)

---

* Faithful cross, among the trees
Thou the noblest of them all!
Forest ne'er doth grow a like
In leaf, in flower or in seed.
Blessed wood and blessed nails,
Blessed burden that it bears!

reappears in a new guise of bright major,* in full, spirited stride, and leads once more to a blast of the hymn, with organ and all, the air in unison of trumpets and all the wood. The expressive cadence merges into a last fanfare of battle, followed by a strain of hymns and with reverberating Amens, where the organ predominates and holds long after all other sounds have ceased.

* In the whole tonality we may see the "meteoric and solar light" of which the composer speaks in the letter quoted above.

CHAPTER VI

THE SYMPHONIC POEMS OF SAINT-SAËNS

THERE is something charming and even ideal in a complete versatility, quite apart from the depth of the separate poems, where there is a never-failing touch of grace and of distinction. The Philip Sydneys are quite as important as the Miltons, perhaps they are as great. Some poets seem to achieve an expression in a certain cyclic or sporadic career of their fancy, touching on this or that form, illuminating with an elusive light the various corners of the garden. Their individual expression lies in the *ensemble* of these touches, rather than in a single profound revelation.

A symptom of the eminence of Saint-Saëns in the history of French music lies in his attitude towards the art as a whole, especially of the German masters, —the absence of national bias in his perceptions. He was foremost in revealing to his countrymen the greatness of Bach, Beethoven and Schumann. Without their influence the present high state of French music can hardly be conceived.

It is part of a broad and versatile mastery that it is difficult to analyze. Thus it is not easy to find salient traits in the art of M. Saint-Saëns. We are apt to think mainly of the distinguished beauty of

his harmonies, until we remember his subtle counterpoint, or in turn the brilliancy of his orchestration. The one trait that he has above his contemporaries is an inbred refinement and restraint,—a thoroughgoing workmanship. If he does not share a certain overwrought emotionalism that is much affected nowadays, there is here no limitation—rather a distinction. Aside from the general charm of his art, Saint-Saëns found in the symphonic poem his one special form, so that it seemed Liszt had created it less for himself than for his French successor. A fine reserve of poetic temper saved him from hysterical excess. He never lost the music in the story, disdaining the mere rude graphic stroke; in his dramatic symbols a musical charm is ever commingled. And a like poise helped him to a right plot and point in his descriptions. So his symphonic poems must ever be enjoyed mainly for the music, with perhaps a revery upon the poetic story. With a less brilliant vein of melody, though they are not so Promethean in reach as those of Liszt, they are more complete in the musical and in the narrative effect.

DANSE MACABRE

Challenged for a choice among the works of the versatile composer, we should hit upon the *Danse Macabre* as the most original, profound and essentially beautiful of all. It is free from certain lacks that one feels in other works, with all their

charm,—a shallowness and almost frivolity; a facility of theme approaching the commonplace.

There is here an eccentric quality of humor, a dæmonic conceit that reach the height of other classic expression of the supernatural.

The music is founded upon certain lines of a poem of *Henri Calais* (under a like title), that may be given as follows:

Zig-a-zig, zig-a-zig-a-zig,
Death knocks on the tomb with rhythmic heel.
Zig-a-zig, zig-a-zig-zig,
Death fiddles at midnight a ghostly reel.

The winter wind whistles, dark is the night;
Dull groans behind the lindens grow loud;
Back and forth fly the skeletons white,
Running and leaping each under his shroud.
Zig-a-zig-a-zig, how it makes you quake,
As you hear the bones of the dancers shake.

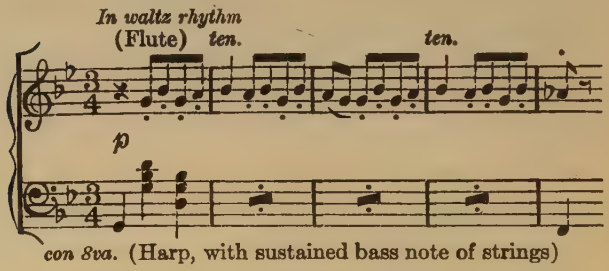
. . . . . .

But hist! all at once they vanish away,
The cock has hailed the dawn of day.

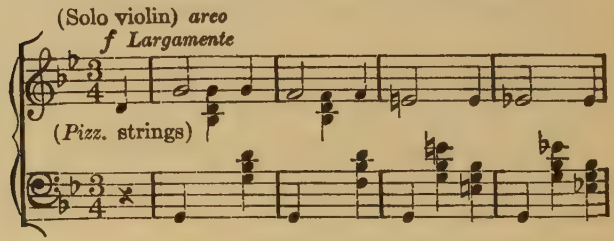
The magic midnight strokes sound clear and sharp. In eager chords of tuned pitch the fiddling ghost summons the dancing groups, where the single fife is soon followed by demon violins.

Broadly sings now the descending tune half-way between a wail and a laugh. And ever in interlude is the skipping, mincing step,—here of reeds answered by solo violin with a light clank of cymbals. Answering the summoning fifes, the unison troop of fiddlers

dance the main step to bright strokes of triangle, then the main ghostly violin trips in with choir of wind. And broadly again sweeps the song between tears and



smiles. Or Death fiddles the first strain of reel for the tumultuous answer of chorus.

Now they build a busy, bustling fugue (of the descending song) and at the serious moment sud-

denly they skip away in new frolicsome, all but joyous, tune: a shadowy counterfeit of gladness, where the sob hangs on the edge of the smile. As if it could no longer be contained, now pours the full passionate grief of the broad descending strain. Death fiddles

his mournful chant to echoing, expressive wind. On the abandon of grief follows the revel of grim humor in pranks of mocking demons. All the strains are mingled in the ghostly bacchanale. The descending song is answered in opposite melody. A chorus of laughter follows the tripping dance. The summoning chords, acclaimed by chorus, grow to appealing song in a brief lull. At the height, to the united skipping dance of overpowering chorus the brass blows the full verse of descending song. The rest is a mad storm of carousing till . . . out of the whirling darkness sudden starts the sharp, sheer call of prosaic day, in high, shrill reed. On a minishing sound of rolling drum and trembling strings, sings a brief line of wistful rhapsody of the departing spirit before the last whisking steps.

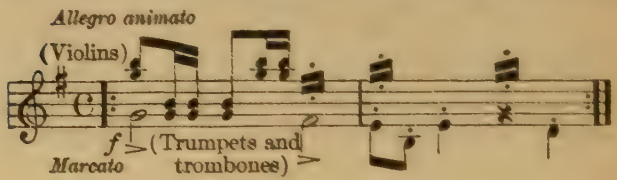
PHÆTON

On a separate page between title and score is a "*Notice,*"—an epitome of the story of Phæton, as follows:

"Phæton has been permitted to drive the chariot of the Sun, his father, through the heavens. But his unskilful hands frighten the steeds. The flaming chariot, thrown out of its course, approaches the terrestrial regions. The whole universe is on the verge of ruin when Jupiter strikes the imprudent Phæton with his thunderbolt."

There is a solemn sense at first (*Maestoso*), a mid-

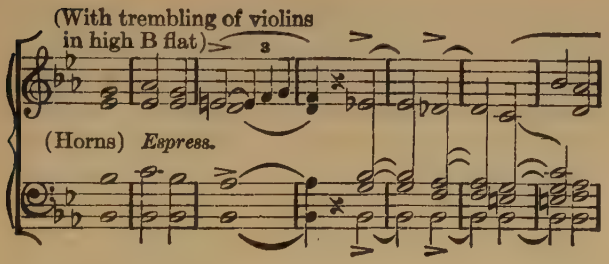
air poise of the harmony, a quick spring of resolution and—on through the heavens. At the outset and always is the pervading musical charm. In the beginning is the enchantment of mere motion in lightest prancing strings and harp with slowly ascending curve. In farther journey comes a spring of the higher wood and soon a firm note of horns and a blast of trumpets on a chirruping call, till the whole panoply of solar brilliance is shimmering. Now with the continuing pulse (of saltant strings) rings a buoyant,



regnant air in the brass. A (canon) chase of echoing voices merely adds an entrancing bewilderment, then yields to other symbols and visions.

Still rises the thread of pulsing strings to higher empyræan and then floats forth in golden horns, as we hang in the heavens, a melody tenderly solemn, as of pent delight, or perhaps of a more fatal hue, with the solar orb encircled by his satellites.

Still on to a higher pole spins the dizzy path; then at the top of the song, it turns in slow descending curve. Almost to Avernus seems the gliding fall when the first melody rings anew. But there is now an anxious sense that dims the joy of motion and in the



returning first motive jars the buoyant spring. Through the maze of fugue with tinge of terror presses the fatuous chase, when—crash comes the shock of higher power. There is a pause of motion in the din and a downward flight as of lifeless figure.

Now seems the soul of the sweet melody to sing, in purest dirge, without the shimmer of attendant motion save a ghostly shadow of the joyous symbol.

THE YOUTH OF HERCULES

The "Legend" is printed in the score as follows:

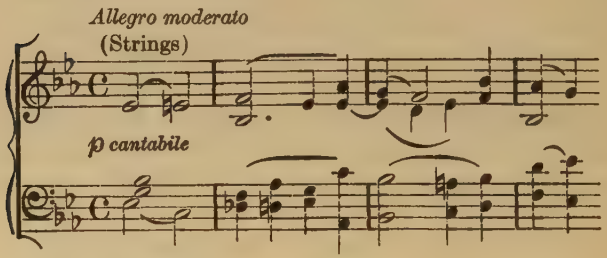
"Fable tells us that upon entering into life Hercules saw the two paths open before him: of pleasure and of virtue.

"Insensible to the seductions of Nymphs and Bacchantes, the hero devotes himself to the career of struggle and combat, at the end of which he glimpses across the flames of the funeral pyre the reward of immortality."

We can let our fancy play about the score and wonderfully hit an intention of the poet. Yet that is

often rather a self-flattery than a real perception. In the small touches we may lose the greater beauty. Here, after all, is the justification of the music. If the graphic picture is added, a little, only, is gained. The main virtue of it lies in our better grasp of the musical design.

In the muted strings, straying dreamily in pairs, is a vague line of the motto,—a foreshadowing of the heroic idea, as are the soft calls of the wind with wooing harp a first vision of delight.

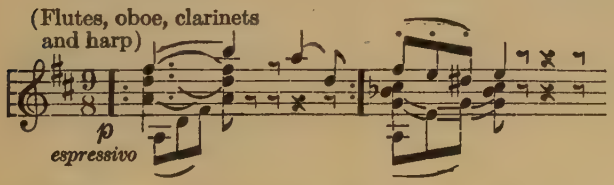


Now begins the main song in sturdy course of unmuted strings. The wood soon join in the rehearsing. But it is not all easy deciphering. The song wanders in gently agitated strings while the horns hold a solemn phrase that but faintly resembles the motto.*

* It is well to resist the vain search for a transnotation of the story. And here we see a virtue of Saint-Saëns himself, a national trait of poise that saved him from losing the music in the picture. His symphonic poems must be enjoyed in a kind of musical revery upon the poetic subject. He disdained the rude graphic stroke, and used dramatic means only where a musical charm was commingled.

Lesser phrases play about the bigger in rising flight of aspiration, crowned at the height with a ray of glad light.

As the dream sinks slowly away, the stern motto is buried in quick flashes of the tempting call. These are mere visions; now comes the scene itself of temptation.

To ripples of harp the reed sings enchantingly in swaying rhythm; other groups in new surprise of

scene usurp the melody with the languishing answer, until one Siren breaks into an impassioned burst, while her sisters hold the dance.

Straight upon her vanished echoes shrieks the shrill pipe of war, with trembling drum. We hear a yearning sigh of the Siren strain before it is swept away in the tide and tumult of strife. Beneath the whirl and motion, the flash and crash of arms, we have glimpses of the heroic figure.

Here is a strange lay in the fierce chorus of battle-cries: the Siren song in bright insistence, changed to the rushing pace of war.

The scene ends in a crash. Loud sings a solemn phrase; do we catch an edge of wistful regret? Now

returns the sturdy course of the main heroic melody; only it is slower (*Andante sostenuto*), and the high stress of cadence is solemnly impassioned.

As if to atone for the slower pace, the theme strikes into a lively fugue, with trembling strings (*Allegro animato*).

There is an air of achievement in the relentless progress and the insistent recurrence of the masterful motive. An episode there is of mere striving and straining, before the theme resumes its vehement attack, followed by lusty echoes all about as of an army of heroes. There is the breath of battle in the rumbling basses and the shaking, quivering brass.

At last the plain song resounds in simple lines of ringing brass, led by the high bugle.*

Yet the struggle, the inner combat, is not over. At the very moment of triumph sings on high over purling harp the mastering strain of Sirens, is buried beneath martial clash and emerges with its enchantment. But here the virile mood and motive gains the victory and strides on to final scene.

We remember how Hercules built and ascended his own funeral pyre. In midst of quivering strings, with dashing harp and shrieking wood, a roll of drum and a clang of brass sounds the solemn chant of the trombone, descending in relentless steps. As the lowest is reached, there comes a spring of freedom in the

* Saint-Saëns employs besides the usual 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba, a small bugle (in B-flat) and 2 cornets.

pulsing figures, like the winging of a spirit, and a final acclaim in a brief line of the legend.

OMPHALE'S SPINNING WHEEL

Between title and score is this *Notice:*

"The subject of this symphonic poem is feminine witchery, the triumphant struggle of weakness. The spinning wheel is a mere pretext, chosen from the point of view of rhythm and the general atmosphere of the piece.

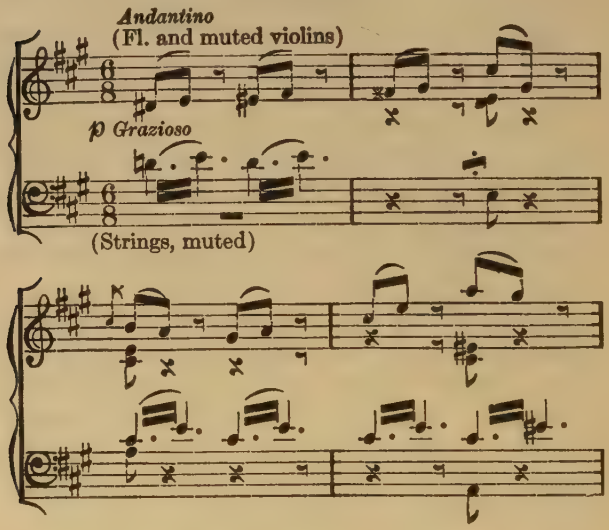
"Those persons who might be interested in a study of the details of the picture, will see . . . the hero groaning in the toils which he cannot break, and . . . Omphale mocking the vain efforts of Hercules."

The versions of the story differ slightly. After the fulfilment of his twelve labors Hercules is ordered by the oracle to a period of three years' service to expiate the killing of the son of King Eurytus in a fit of madness. Hermes placed him in the household of Omphale, queen of Lydia, widow of Tmolus. Hercules is degraded to female drudgery, is clothed in soft raiment and set to spin wool, while the queen assumes the lion skin and club.

In another version he was sold as slave to Omphale, who restored him to freedom. Their passion was mutual. The story has a likeness to a similar episode of Achilles.

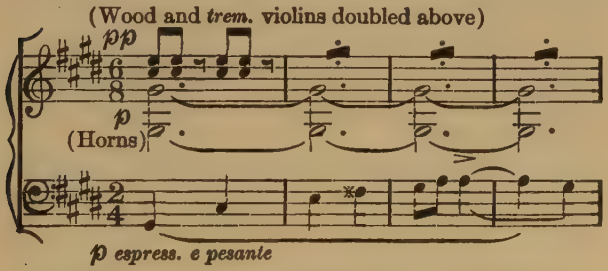
The spinning-wheel begins *Andante* in muted strings alternating with flutes and gradually hurries into a lively motion. Here the horn accents the

spinning, while another thread (of higher wood) runs through the graceful woof. A chain of alluring harmonies preludes the ensnaring song, mainly of woodwind above the humming strings, with soft dotting of the harmony by the horns. The violins, to be sure, often enforce the melody.



In the second verse, with fuller chorus, the harp adds its touches to the harmony of the horns, with lightest tap of tonal drum. Later a single note of the trumpet is answered by a silvery laugh in the wood. Between the verses proceeds the luscious chain of harmonies, as with the turning of the wheel.

Now with the heavily expressive tones of low, unmuted strings and the sonorous basses of reed and brass (together with a low roll of drum and soft clash of cymbals) an heroic air sings in low strings and brass, to meet at each period a shower of notes from the harp. The song grows intense with the



(Cellos, basses, bassoons and trombone, doubled below)

added clang of trumpets and roll of drums,—only to succumb to the more eager attack of the siren chorus. At last the full effort of strength battling vainly with weakness reaches a single heroic height and sinks away with dull throbs.

In soothing answer falls the caressing song of the high reed in the phrase of the heroic strain, lightly, quickly and, it seems, mockingly aimed. In gently railing triumph returns the pretty song of the wheel, with a new buoyant spring. Drums and martial brass yield to the laughing flutes, the cooing horns and the soft rippling harp with murmuring strings, to return like captives in the train at the height of the gaiety.

CHAPTER VII

CÉSAR FRANCK

THE new French school of symphony that broke upon the world in the latter part of the nineteenth century had its pioneer and true leader in César Franck.* It was he who gave it a stamp and a tradition.

The novelty of his style, together with the lateness of his acclaim (of which it was the probable cause), have marked him as more modern than others who were born long after him.

The works of Franck, in other lines of oratorio and chamber music, show a clear personality, quite apart from a prevailing modern spirit. A certain charm of settled melancholy seems to inhere in his wonted style. A mystic is Franck in his dominant moods, with a special sense and power for subtle harmonic process, ever groping in a spiritual discontent with defined tonality.

A glance at the detail of his art discloses Franck as one of the main harmonists of his age, with Wagner and Grieg. Only, his harmonic manner was

* If language and association, as against the place of birth, may define nationality, we have in César Franck another worthy expression of French art in the symphony. He was born at Liège in 1822; he died in 1890.

blended if not balanced by a stronger, sounder counterpoint than either of the others. But with all the originality of his style we cannot escape a sense of the stereotype, that indeed inheres in all music that depends mainly on an harmonic process. His harmonic ideas, that often seem inconsequential, in the main merely surprise rather than move or please. The enharmonic principle is almost too predominant, —an element that ought never to be more than occasional. For it is founded not upon ideal, natural harmony, but upon a conventional compromise, an expedient compelled by the limitation of instruments. This over-stress appears far stronger in the music of Franck's followers, above all in their frequent use of the whole tone "scale" which can have no other *rationale* than a violent extension of the enharmonic principle.* With a certain quality of kaleidoscope, there is besides (in the harmonic manner of César Franck) an infinitesimal kind of progress in smallest steps. It is a dangerous form of ingenuity, to

* Absolute harmony would count many more than the semitones of which our music takes cognizance. For purpose of convenience on the keyboard the semitonal raising of one note is merged in the lowering of the next higher degree in the scale. However charming for occasional surprise may be such a substitution, a continuous, pervading use cannot but destroy the essential beauty of harmony and the clear sense of tonality; moreover it is mechanical in process, devoid of poetic fancy, purely chaotic in effect. There is ever a danger of confusing the novel in art with new beauty.

which the French are perhaps most prone,—an originality mainly in details.

And yet we must praise in the French master a wonderful workmanship and a profound sincerity of sentiment. He shows probably the highest point to which a style that is mainly harmonic may rise. But when he employs his broader mastery of tonal architecture, he attains a rare height of lofty feeling, with reaches of true dramatic passion.

The effect, to be sure, of his special manner is somewhat to dilute the temper of his art, and to depress the humor. It is thus that the pervading melancholy almost compels the absence of a "slow movement" in his symphony. And so we feel in all his larger works for instruments a suddenness of recoil in the Finale.

One can see in Franck, in analogy with his German contemporaries, an etherealized kind of "Tristan and Isolde,"—a "Paolo and Francesca" in a world of shades. Compared with his followers the quality of stereotype in Franck is merely general; there is no excessive use of one device.

A baffling element in viewing the art of Franck is his remoteness of spirit, the strangeness of his temper. He lacked the joyous spring that is a dominant note in the classic period. Nor on the other hand did his music breathe the pessimism and naturalism that came with the last rebound of Romantic reaction. Rather was his vein one of high spiritual absorption—not so much in recoil, as merely apart from

the world in a kind of pious seclusion. Perhaps his main point of view was the church-organ. He seems a religious prophet in a non-religious age. With his immediate disciples he was a leader in the manner of his art, rather than in the temper of his poetry.

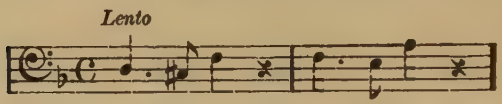
SYMPHONY IN D MINOR

The scoring shows a sign of modern feeling in the prominence of the brasses. With all contrast of spirit, the analogy of Franck with the Liszt-Wagner school and manner is frequently suggestive.

The main novelty of outer detail is the plan of merely three movements. Nor is there a return to the original form, without the Scherzo. To judge from the headings, the "slow" movement is absent. In truth, by way of cursory preamble, the chronic vein of César Franck is so ingrainedly reflective that there never can be with him an absence of the meditative phrase. Rather must there be a vehement rousing of his muse from a state of mystic adoration to rhythmic energy and cheer.*

* The key of the work is given by the composer as D minor. The first movement alone is in the nominal key. The second (in B flat) is in the submediant, the last in the tonic major. The old manner in church music, that Bach often used, of closing a minor tonality with a major chord, was probably due to a regard for the mood of the congregation. An extension of this tradition is frequent in a long coda in the major. But this is quite different in kind from a plan where all of the last movement is in insistent major. We know that it is quite possible to begin a work

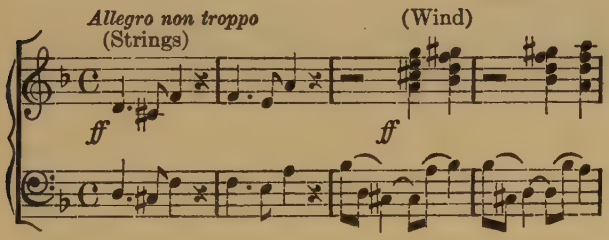
Lento in basses of the strings a strain sounds like a basic motive, answered with harmonies in the wood. In further strings lies the full tenor of quiet reflection, with sombre color of tonal scheme. Motives are less controlling probably in Franck than in any other symphonist,—less so, at any rate, than his one



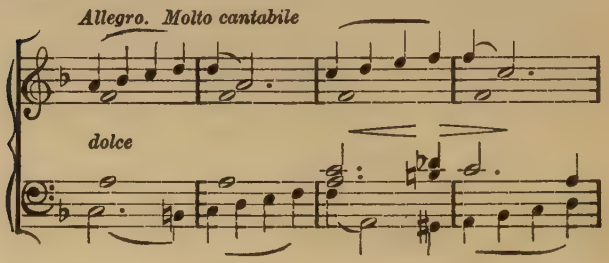
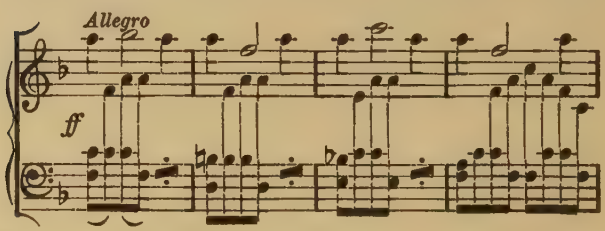
special mood and manner. Yet nowhere is the strict figural plot more faithful in detail than with César Franck.

The theme has an entirely new ring and answer when it enters Allegro after the Lento prelude. The further course of the tune here is in eccentric, resolute stride in the descending scale. Our new answer is much evident in the bass. The Allegro seems a mere irruption; for the Lento prelude reappears in full solemnity. Indeed, with all the title and pace, this

at some distance from the main key, leading to it by tortuous path of modulation; though there is no reason why we may not question the composer's own inscription, the controlling point is really the whole tonal scheme. Here the key of the second movement is built on a design in minor,—would have less reason in the major. For it rests on a degree that does not exist in the tonic major. To be sure, Beethoven did invent the change to a lowered submediant in a succeeding movement. And, of course, the final turn to the tonic major is virtually as great a license.

seems very like the virtual "slow" movement. A mood of rapt, almost melancholy absorption prevails, with rare flashes of joyous utterance, where the Allegro enters as if to break the thrall of meditation. A very striking inversion of the theme now appears. The gradual growth of phrases in melodious instalments is a trait of Franck (as it is of Richard Strauss). The rough motto at each turn has a new

phase and frequently is transfigured to a fresh tune. So out of the first chance counterfigures somehow spring beautiful melodies, where we feel the fitness and the relevance though we have not heard them before. It is a quality that Franck shares with Brahms, so that in a mathematical spirit we might care to deduce all the figures from the first phrase. This themal manner is quite analogous to the harmonic style of Franck,—a kaleidoscope of gradual steps, a slow procession of pale hues of tone that with strange aptness reflect the dim religious light of mystic musing.

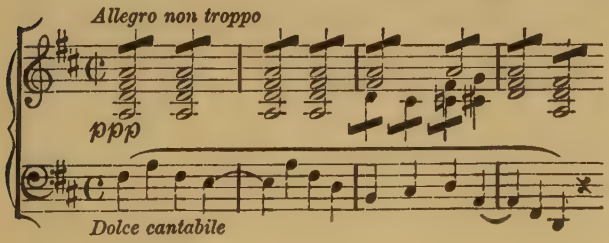
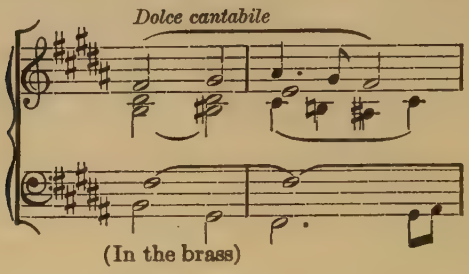
More and more expressive are the stages of the first

figures until we have a duet *molto cantabile* in the strings. Much of the charm of the movement lies in the balance of the new rhythms, the eccentric and the flowing. By some subtle path there grows a song

in big tones of unison, wood and strings and trumpets, that is the real hymnal refrain of the movement. Between this note almost of exultation and all shades of pious dreaming the mood is constantly shifting.

Another phrase rises also to a triumphant height (the clear reverse of the former tuneful melody) that comes now like a big *envoi* of assuring message.

Though the whole movement is evenly balanced between Allegro and Penseroso (so far as pace is con-

cerned), the mood of reflection really finds full vent; it has no reason for a further special expression.

Simple as the Allegretto appears in its suggestion of halting dance, the intent in the episodes is of the subtlest. The slow trip of strings and harp is soon given a new meaning with the melody of English horn. Throughout we are somehow divided between pure dance and a more thoughtful muse. In the first departure to an episode in major, seems to sing the essence of the former melody in gently murmuring strings, where later the whole chorus are drawn in. The song moves on clear thread and wing right out of the mood of the dance-tune; but the very charm lies in the mere outer change of guise. And so the second episode is still far from all likeness with the first dance beyond a least sense of the old trip that does appear here and there. It is all clearly a true scheme of variations, the main theme disguised beyond outer semblance, yet faithfully present throughout in the essential rhythm and harmony.

In the Finale, *Allegro non troppo,* we are really clear, at the outset, of the toils of musing melancholy.

After big bursts of chords, a tune rolls pleasantly along, *dolce cantabile,* in basses of wood and strings. Expressive after-phrases abound, all in the same jolly mood, until the whole band break boisterously on the simple song, with a new sonorous phrase of basses. Then, in sudden remove, sounds the purest bit of melody of all the symphony, in gentlest tones

of brass (trumpet, trombone and tuba). But, though in complete recoil from the rhythmic energy of Allegro theme, it is even farther from the reflective mood than the latter. It shows, in this very contrast, the absence of the true lyric in the meditative vein, frequent with César Franck. The burst of melody blossoms ever fairer. In its later musing the tune browses in the bass. A waving phrase grows in the violins, which continues with strange evenness through the entrance of new song where we are surprised by the strange fitness of the Allegretto melody. And the second phase of the latter follows as if it belonged here. So, almost listless, without a hair of

rhythmic change (*les temps out toujours la même valeur*), the Finale theme sings again most softly in the strings. It has, to be sure, lost all of its color, without the original throb of accompanying sounds. The phase of the movement is a shadowy procession of former ideas, united in the dreamy haze that enshrouds them. The stir that now begins is not of the first pale hue of thought, rather the vein of big discussion, brewing a storm that breaks finally in full blast on the gentle melody (of the brass) transfigured in ringing triumph, in all the course of the song. Nor is the succeeding phase the mystic habit of our poet; it is a mere farther digestion of the meat of the melody that leads once more to a height of climax whence we return to first course of themes, tuneful afterphrase and all, with the old happy motion. The counterpoint here is the mere joyous ringing of many strains all about.

Against all rules comes a new chorusing pæan on the theme of Allegretto, led by stentorian basses, together with an enchanting after-strain, which we might have remarked before. And still another quarter, long hushed, is heard anew, as a voice sounds a faint reminder of the hymn of the first Allegro. Indeed, the combining strains before the close seem sprung all of one parental idea. The motto of the beginning sings in fittest answer to the latest phrases. The very maze of the concert forbids our turning to their first origin. The end is in joyous chanting of the Finale melody.

CHAPTER VIII

D'INDY AND THE FOLLOWERS OF FRANCK

PERHAPS the noblest essay in symphonic music of the followers of Franck is the second symphony of Vincent D'Indy.* His vein is indeed throughout nearest akin of all the disciples to the serious muse of the master.

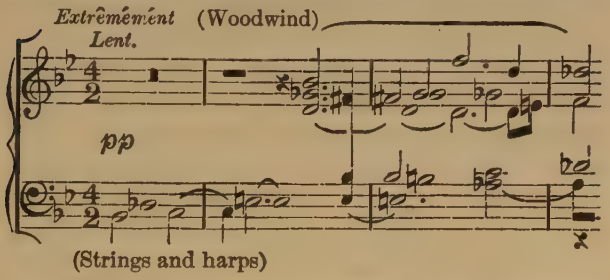
Though D'Indy is surpassed in a certain poetic originality by some of his compatriot contemporaries, there is in this symphony a breadth of design and detail, a clear melodic quality and a sustained lofty feeling that seem to mark it the typical French symphony of its time. The strength of the work lies in a unity that is not merely of figure and outline. If we must measure a symphony mainly by the slow movement, we cannot avoid, with all the languorous beauty, a certain conventionality of mood, stressed with an exotic use of the appoggiatura, while in the Scherzo is a refined savagery of modern cacophony.

The directions are all in French; we are reminded of Schumann's departure from the Italian fashion.

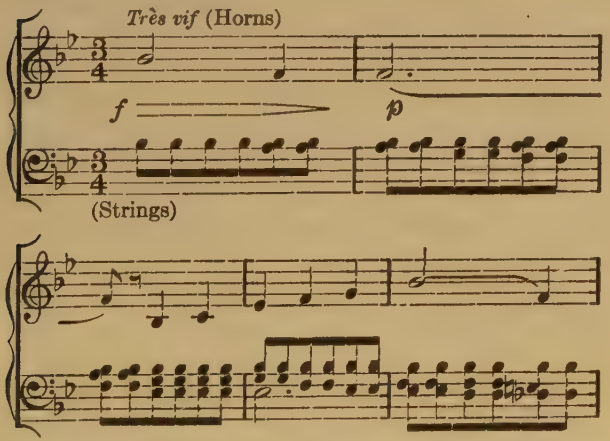
Each movement, save the third, has its prelude: a gathering of threads before the new story. The first notes of basses, together with the answer on high, sound a prophetic legend of the whole.

* Vincent d'Indy was born in Paris on March 27, 1852.

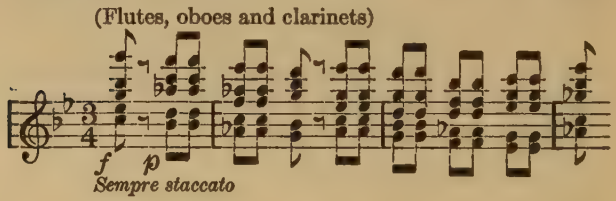
The harmonic lucubrations are profoundly subtle. Indeed the very nature of the first phrase is of dim



groping; it ends in a climax of the answer and merges into the main song of the Allegro (*très vif*) in horns, with rapid trip of strings.



Throughout (from a technical view) is a fine mastery of the device of ornamental notes, and secondary

harmonies; there is also a certain modern sense of chords and their relations. Together with an infinite brilliance of these resources there is not only no weakness in cogency of form, but there is a rare unity of design. The movements are bound together, at least in themal relation, as strictly as in any symphony. While the first phrase of the Allegro theme may hark back to the answer of original motto, the second is the main thread of narra-

tive. Again and again is the climax rung on the first high note of the theme. Then, in lieu of cadence, out of a bright dissonance the quick notes dance upward in sturdy pace, the answer of the Allegro in sharp disguise. And then from the height descends a refreshing spray of subtlest discords, ending in another masterful burst of new harmony.

The dainty, dazzling play is stopped by a rough thud of basses and a fierce clang of chords. In the sharp blare of brass on the ascending phrase is almost lost the original motto in lowest basses. It is now heard in gradually quickened speed, while the rising phrase runs more timidly. At last the quickened motto sinks gently into lulling motion, *un peu*

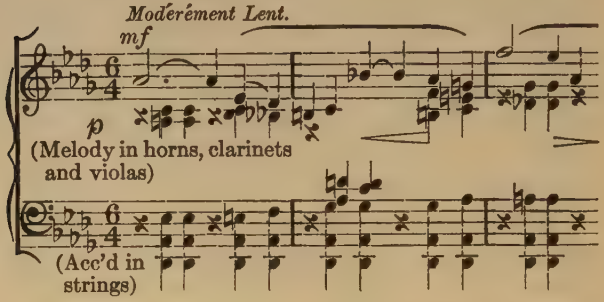
plus modéré. Above, in strings and horns, the melody haunts us with a dim sense that takes us to the first languishing answer of the original legend. And the whole is strong-knit; for the very Allegro theme began in resolute mood of a like figure. A counter-strain rises to meet the main phrase. The whole episode is an intertwining of song in the vein of the first answer of motto.

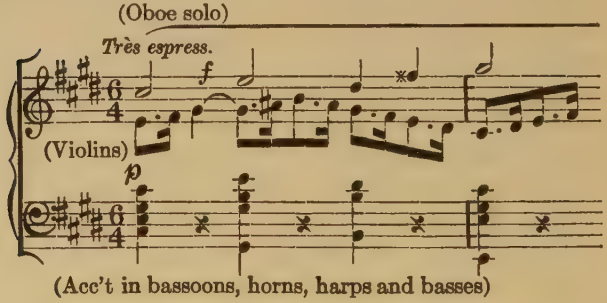
The quick rising notes suddenly return with snatches of the main motive, the chain of echoing phrases runs a gamut of moods, fitful, anxious, soothed, until the bright upward trip begins anew, with the enchanting burst of chord and descending harmonies. A climactic height is stressed by a rough meeting of opposing groups, in hostile tone and movement, ending in a trill of flutes and a reëntry of the episode.

In the returning Allegro the thread is still the same, though richer in color and texture. Again there is the plunge into dark abyss, with shriek of harp, and the ominous theme in the depths. The slow ascending phrase here has a full song and sway. The end is in spirited duet of two quick motives.

The second movement, *modérément lent,* begins in revery on the answer of original motive, and the stately pathos of the theme, in horns, clarinets and violas, with rhythmic strings, grows naturally out of the mood.

Plus animé, in subtle change of pace (from 𝅗𝅥 to 𝅗𝅥), the episode begins with eccentric stride of harps

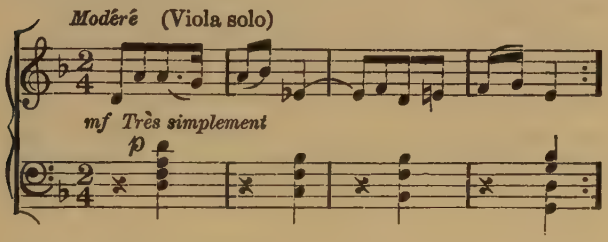
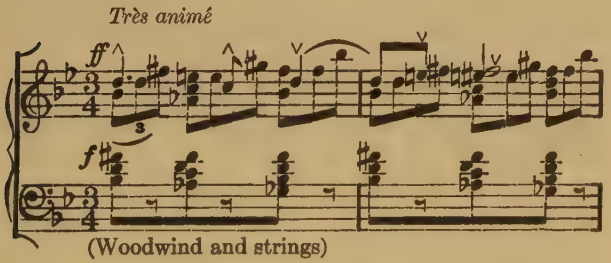
(and added woodwind), that serves as a kind of

accompanying figure and foil for the sweeping song of the real second melody (in oboe solo, succeeded by the clarinet).



In the clash of themes and harmonies of the climax, the very limits of modern license seem to be invoked. Later the three themes are entwined in a passage of masterly counterpoint.

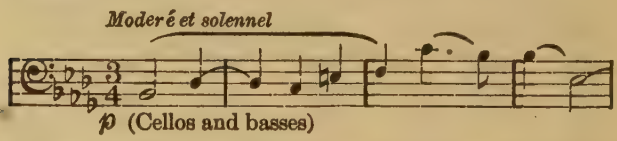
There is a touch of ancient harmony in the delicate tune of third movement, which has the virtue of end-

less weaving. It is sung by solo violin, mainly supported by a choir of lower strings.

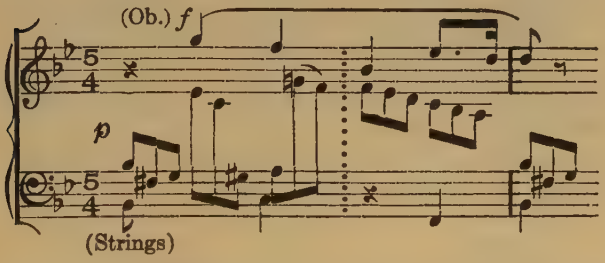
A final conclusive line is given by the solo flute. Besides the constant course of varying tune, there is a power of ever changing harmony that seems to lie in some themes.

One can hardly call it all a Scherzo. It is rather an idyll after the pathos of the Andante. Or, from another view, reversing the usual order, we may find the quality of traditional Trio in the first melody and a bacchanale of wild humor in the middle. For, out

of a chance phrase of horns grows of all the symphony the boldest harmonic phrase (repeated

through ten bars). Above rings a barbarous cry, in defiance of common time and rhythm.

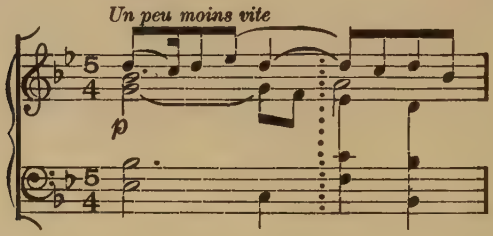
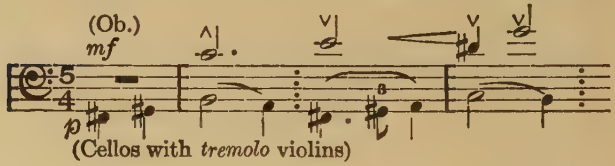
Suddenly we are surprised by the sound of the martial stride of the second theme of the Andante which moves on the sea of rough harmony as on a native element. One whim follows another. The same motion is all there, but as if in shadow, in softest sound, and without the jar of discord; then comes the fiercest clash of all, and now a gayest dance of the first tune, *assez vif,* in triple rhythm, various figures having their *pas seul.* A second episode returns, brilliant in high pace but purged of the former war of sounds. At the end is the song of the first tune, with new pranks and sallies.

The beginning of the Finale is all in a musing review of past thoughts. The shadow of the last tune lingers, in slower pace; the ominous dirge of first motto sounds below; the soothing melody of the Andante sings a verse. In solemn fugue the original motto is reared from its timid phrase to masterful utterance, with splendid stride. Or

rather the theme is blended of the first two phrases, merging their opposite characters in the new mood of resolution. The strings prepare for the sonorous entrance of woodwind and horns. One of the greatest fugal episodes of symphonies, it is yet

a mere prelude to the real movement, where the light theme is drawn from a phrase of latest cadence. And the dim hue of minor which began the symphony, and all overspread the prelude, at last yields to the clear major. There is something of the struggle of shadow and light of the great third symphony of Brahms.

The continuous round of the theme, in its unstable pace (of ⅝), has a strange power of motion, the feel-

ing of old passacaglia. To be sure, it is the mere herald and companion of the crowning tune, in solo of the reeds.

From the special view of structure, there is no symphony, modern or classic, with such an overpowering combination and resolution of integral themes in one movement. So almost constant is the derivation of ideas, that one feels they must be all related. Thus, the late rush of rhythm, in the Finale, is broken by a quiet verse where with enchanting subtlety we are carried back somewhere to the idyll of third movement.

Above, rises another melody, and from its simple outline grows a fervor and pathos that, aside from the basic themes of the whole work, strike the main feeling of the Finale.

The martial trip from the Andante joins later in the return of the whirling rhythm. At last the motto strikes on high, but the appealing counter-melody is not easily hushed.

It breaks out later in a verse of exalted beauty and passion. The struggle of the two ideas reminds us of the Fifth Symphony. At last the gloom of the fateful motto is relieved by the return of the original answer, and we seem to see a new source of latest ideas, so that we wonder whether all the melodies are but guises of the motto and answer, which now at the close, sing in united tones a hymn of peace and bliss.

CHAPTER IX

DÉBUSSY AND THE INNOVATORS

AT intervals during the course of the art have appeared the innovators and pioneers,—rebels against the accepted manner and idiom. The mystery is that while they seem necessary to progress they seldom create enduring works. The shadowy lines may begin somewhere among the Hucbalds and other early adventurers. One of the most striking figures is Peri, who boldly, almost impiously, abandoned the contrapuntal style, the only one sanctioned by tradition, and set the dramatic parts in informal musical prose with a mere strumming of instruments.

It is not easy to see the precise need of such reaction. The radical cause is probably a kind of inertia in all things human, by which the accepted is thought the only way. Rules spring up that are never wholly true; at best they are shifts to guide the student, inadequate conclusions from past art. The essence of an art can never be put in formulas. Else we should be content with the verbal form. The best excuse for the rule is that it is meant to guard the element of truth in art from meretricious pretence.

And, we must not forget, Art progresses by slow degrees; much that is right in one age could not come in an earlier, before the intervening step.

The masters, when they had won their spurs, were ever restive under rules.* Yet they underwent the strictest discipline, gaining early the secret of expression; for the best purpose of rules is liberation, not restraint. On the other hand they were, in the main, essentially conservative. Sebastian Bach clung to the older manner, disdaining the secular sonata for which his son was breaking the ground.

The master feels the full worth of what has been achieved; else he has not mastered. He merely gives a crowning touch of poetic message, while the lighter mind is busy with tinkering of newer forms. For the highest reaches of an art, the poet must first have grasped all that has gone before. He will not rebel before he knows the spirit of the law, nor spend himself on novelty for its own sake.

The line between the Master and the Radical may often seem vague. For, the former has his Pro-

* Some of the chance sayings of Mozart (recently edited by Kerst-Elberfeld) betray much contempt for academic study: "Learning from books is of no account. Here, here, and here (pointing to ear, head, and heart) is your school." On the subject of librettists "with their professional tricks," he says: "If we composers were equally faithful to our own rules (which were good enough when men knew no better), we should turn out just as poor a quality in our music as they in their librettos." Yet, elsewhere, he admits: "No one has spent so much pains on the study of composition as myself. There is hardly a famous master in music whom I have not read through diligently and often."

methean strokes, all unpremeditated, compelled by the inner sequence,—as when Beethoven strikes the prophetic drum in the grim Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony; or in the Eroica when the horn sounds sheer ahead, out of line with the sustaining chorus; or when Bach leaps to his harmonic heights in organ fantasy and toccata; or Mozart sings his exquisite clashes in the G Minor Symphony.

As the true poet begins by absorption of the art that he finds, his early utterance will be imitative. His ultimate goal is not the strikingly new but the eternally true. It is a question less of men than of a point of view.

It seems sometimes that in art as in politics two parties are needed, one balancing the weaknesses of the other. As certain epochs are overburdened by the spirit of a past poet, so others are marred by the opposite excess, by a kind of neo-mania. The latter comes naturally as reaction from the former. Between them the poet holds the balance of clear vision.

When Peri overthrew the trammels of counterpoint, in a dream of Hellenic revival of drama, he could not hope to write a master-work. Destructive rebellion cannot be blended with constructive beauty. An antidote is of necessity not nourishment. Others may follow the path-breaker and slowly reclaim the best of old tradition from the new soil. The strange part of this rebellion is that it is always marked by the quality of stereotype which it seeks to avoid. This

is an invariable symptom. It cannot be otherwise; for the rejection of existing art leaves too few resources. Moreover, the pioneer has his eye too exclusively upon the mere manner.

A wholesome reaction there may be against excess. When Gluck dared to move the hearts of his hearers instead of tickling their ears, he achieved his purpose by positive beauty, without actual loss. In this sense every work of art is a work of revolution. So Wagner, especially in his earlier dramas,* by sheer sincerity and poetic directness, corrected a frivolous tradition of opera. But when he grew destructive of melody and form, by theory and practice, he sank to the rôle of innovator, with pervading trait of stereotype, in the main merely adding to the lesser resources of the art. His later works, though they contain episodes of overwhelming beauty, cannot have a place among the permanent classics, alone by reason of their excessive reiteration.

One of the most charming instances of this iconoclasm is the music of Claude Débussy.† In a way we are reminded of the first flash of Wagner's later manner: the same vagueness of tonality, though with a different complexion and temper. Like the German, Débussy has his own novel use of instruments. He is also a rebel against episodic melody. Only, with Wagner the stand was more of theory than of prac-

* The "Flying Dutchman," "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser" seemed destined to survive Wagner's later works.

† Born in 1862.

tice. His lyric inspiration was here too strong; otherwise with Débussy. Each article of rebellion is more highly stressed in the French leader, save as to organic form, where the latter is far the stronger. And finally the element of mannerism cannot be gainsaid in either composer.*

Among the special traits of Débussy's harmonic manner is a mingling with the main chord of the third below. There is a building downward, as it were. The harmony, complete as it stands, seeks a lower foundation so that the plain tower (as it looked at first) is at the end a lofty minaret. It is striking that a classic figure in French music should have stood, in the early eighteenth century, a champion of this idea, to be sure only in the domain of theory. There is a touch of romance in the fate of a pioneer, rejected for his doctrine in one age, taken up in the art of two centuries later.†

* Some recurring traits Wagner and Débussy have in common, such as the climactic chord of the ninth. The melodic appoggiatura is as frequent in the earlier German as the augmented chord of the fifth in the later Frenchman.

† Rameau, when the cyclopædic spirit was first stirring and musical art was sounding for a scientific basis, insisted on the element of the third below, implying a tonic chord of 6, 5, 3. Here he was opposed by Fétis, Fux and other theoretic authority; judgment was definitively rendered against him by contemporary opinion and prevailing tradition. It cannot be said that the modern French practice has justified Rameau's theory, since with all the charm of the enriched chord, there is ever a begging of the question of the ultimate root.

A purely scientific basis must be shunned in any direct approach of the art whether critical or creative, —alone for the fatal allurement of a separate research. The truth is that a spirit of fantastic experiment, started by the mystic manner of a César Franck, sought a sanction in the phenomena of acoustics. So it is likely that the enharmonic process of Franck led to the strained use of the whole-tone scale (of which we have spoken above) by a further departure from tonality.* And yet, in all truth, there can be no doubt of the delight of these flashes of the modern French poet,—a delicate charm as beguiling as the bolder, warmer harmonies of the earlier German. Instead of the broad exultation of Wagner there is in Débussy the subtle, insinuating dissonance. Nor is the French composer wanting in audacious strokes. Once for all he stood the emancipator of the art from the stern rule of individual vocal procedure. He cut the Gordian knot of harmonic pedagogy by the mere weapon of poetic elision. He simply omitted the obvious link by a license ancient in poetry and even in prose. He devised in his harmonies the paradox, that is the essence of art, that the necessary step somehow becomes unnecessary.

* As the lower overtones, discovered by a later science, clearly confirm the tonal system of the major scale, slowly evolved in the career of the art,—so the upper overtones are said to justify the whole-tone process. At best this is a case of the devil quoting scripture. The main recurring overtones, which are lower and audible, are all in support of a clear prevailing tonality.

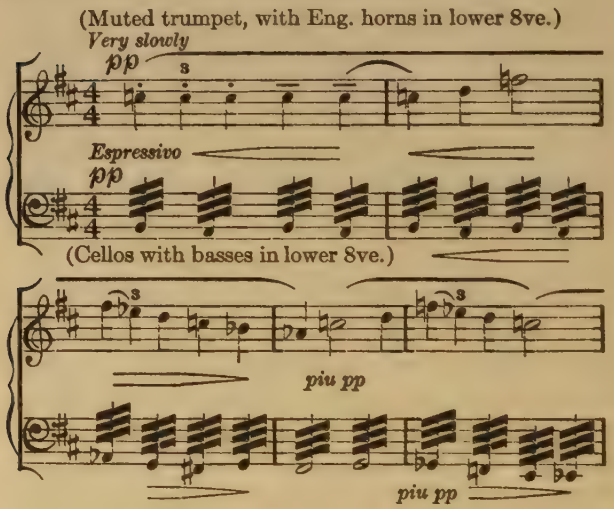
Though Wagner plunges without ceremony into his languorous chords, he carefully resolves their further course. Débussy has them tumbling in headlong descent like sportive leviathans in his sea of sound. Moreover he has broken these fetters of a small punctilio without losing the sense of a true harmonic sequence. Nay, by the very riotous revel of upper harmonies he has stressed the more clearly the path of the fundamental tone. When he enters the higher sanctuary of pure concerted voices, he is fully aware of the fine rigor of its rites. And finally his mischievous abandon never leads him to do violence to the profoundest element of the art, of organic design.*

"THE SEA." THREE SYMPHONIC SKETCHES

I.—From Dawn to Noon on the Sea. In awesome quiet of unsoothing sounds we feel, over a dual elemental motion, a quick fillip as of sudden lapping wave, while a shadowy air rises slowly in hollow intervals. Midst trembling whispers descending (like the

* In the drama Débussy avoids the question of form by treating the music as mere scenic background. Wagner, in his later works, attempted the impossible of combining a tonal with the dramatic plot. In both composers, to carry on the comparison beyond the technical phase, is a certain reaching for the primeval, in feeling as in tonality. Here they are part of a larger movement of their age. The subjects of their dramas are chosen from the same period of mediæval legend, strongly surcharged in both composers with a spirit of fatalism where tragedy and love are indissolubly blended.

soughing wind), a strange note, as of distant trumpet, strikes in gentle insistence—out of the other rhythm—and blows a wailing phrase. The trembling whisper has sunk to lowest depths. Still continues the lapping of waves—all sounds of unhuman nature.

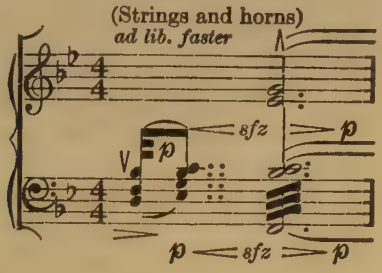


On quicker spur the shadowy motive flits faster here and there in a slow swelling din of whispering, to the insistent plash of wave. Suddenly the sense of desolation yields to soothing play of waters—a *berceuse* of the sea—and now a song sings softly (in horn), though strangely jarring on the murmuring lullaby. The soothing cheer is anon broken by a shift of new tone. There is a fluctuation of pleasant and

strange sounds; a dulcet air on rapturous harmony is hushed by unfriendly plash of chord.

Back again in the quieter play of rhythm the strange, sweet song (of horns) returns.

In a ravishing climax of gentle chorus of quick plashing waves and swirling breeze the song sings on and the trumpet blows its line of tune to a ringing phrase of the clarinet.



When this has died down, the lapping waves, as in concert, strike in full chord that spreads a hue of warmth, as of the first peep of sun. It is indeed as though the waves rose towards the sun with a glow of welcome.

In the wake of the first stirring shock is a host of soft cheering sounds of bustling day, like a choir of birds or bells. The eager madrigal leads to a final blast (with acclaiming chorus of big rocking waves), echoed in golden notes of the horns. One slight touch has heightened the hue to warmest cheer; but once do we feel the full glow of risen sun.

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The chilling shadows return, as the wistful air of hushed trumpet sounds again. We hover between flashes of warming sun, until the waves have abated; in soothing stillness the romantic horn * sings a lay of legend.

Now to friendly purling of playful wavelets, the sea moves in shifting harmonies. In sudden climax the motion of the waves fills all the brass in triumphant pæan, in the gleam of high noon.

II.—Play of the Waves. There is a poetic background as for the play of legend. We seem to be watching the sea from a window in the castle of *Pelléas.* For there is a touch of dim romance in a phrase of the clarinet.

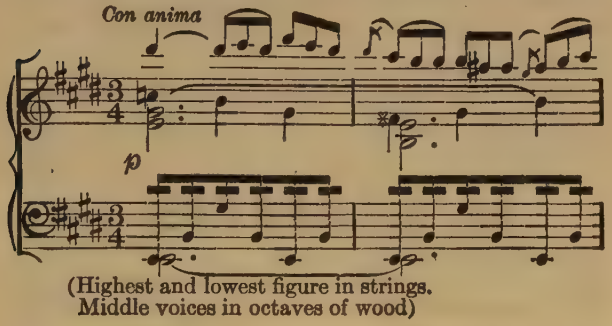
The movement of waves is clear, and the unconscious concert of sea-sounds, the deeper pulse of ocean (in the horns), the flowing ripples, the sharp dash of lighter surf (in the Glockenspiel), all with a constant tremor, an instability of element (in trembling strings). We cannot help feeling the illusion of scene in the impersonal play of natural sounds. Anon will come a shock of exquisite sweetness that must have something of human. And then follows a resonant clash with spray of colliding seas.

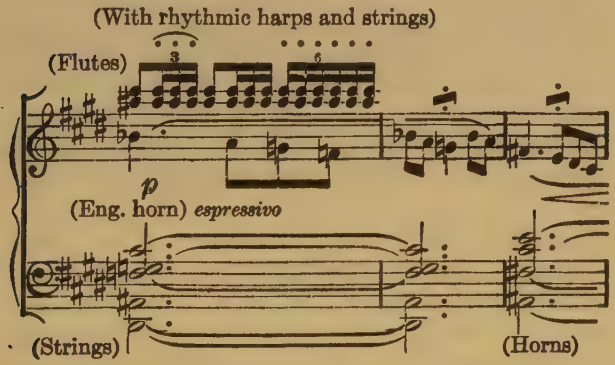
Here the story of the waves begins, and there are clearly two rôles.

To light lapping and cradling of waters the wood sings the simple lay, while strings discourse in quicker,

* English horn.

higher phrase. The parts are reversed. A shower of chilling wave (in gliding harps) breaks the thread.

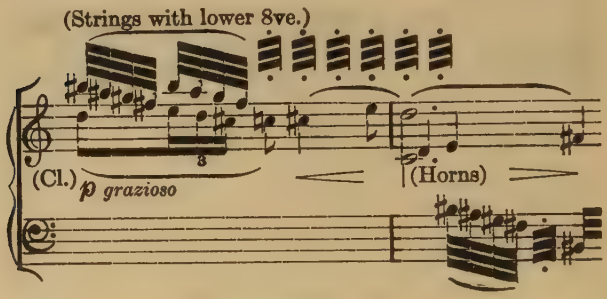


Now golden tones (of horns) sound a mystic tale of one of the former figures. The scene shim-

mers in sparkling, glinting waters (with harp and trilling wood and strings). But against the soothing

background the story (of English horn) has a chill, ominous strain.

With the returning main song comes the passionate crisis, and we are back in the mere plash and play of impersonal waves.

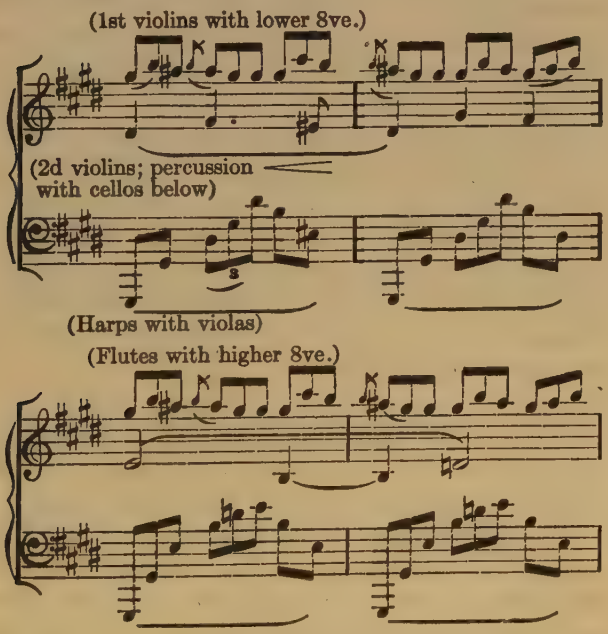
On dancing ripples, a nixie is laughing to echoing horns and lures us back to the story.



Later, it seems, two mermaids sing in twining duet. In a warm hue of light the horns sound a weird tale. It is taken up by teasing chorus of lighter voices. In the growing volume sounds a clear, almost martial call of the brass.

In a new shade of scene we recover the lost burden of song; the original figures appear (in the slower air of trembling strings and the quicker play of reed, harp and bells), and wander through ever new, moving phases. A shower of chords (in strings and shaking brass) brings back the ominous melody, amidst a chorus of light chatter, but firmly resting

on a warm background of harmony. And the strain roves on generous path and rises out of all its gloom to a burst of profound cheer.



(See page 104, line 11.)

As in all fairy tales, the scene quickly vanishes. On dancing rays and ripples is the laughing nixie; but suddenly breaks the first song of the main figures. A climactic phrase of trumpets ends with a burst of all the chorus on stirring harmony, where in diminishing strokes of bells long rings the melodic note.

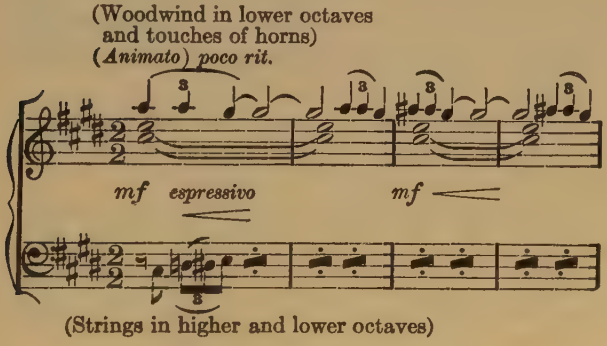
The teasing motive of the nixie returns while the trumpet sounds a shadowy echo of its phrase, again to dying peal of bells. A chorus of eerie voices sing the mocking air, and again sounds the refrain of trumpet as in rebuke. On a tumult of teasing cries flashes a delivering burst of brilliant light, and we are back in the first scene of the story. Only the main figure is absent. And there is in the eager tension of pace a quivering between joy and doubt. Then, in answer to the lighter phrase of the other, is the returning figure with a new song now of blended longing and content that soars into higher flights until a mighty chorus repeats the strain that rises to triumphant height of joy and transforms the mocking motive to the same mood.

But it is all a play of the waves. And we are left once more to the impersonal scene where yet the fragrance of legend hovers over the dying harmonies.

III.—Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea. Tumultuous is the humor of the beginning; early sounds the stroke of wave of the first hour of the sea. The muted trumpet blows a strain (to trembling strings) that takes us back to the first (quoted) tune of the symphony in the wistful mood of dawn. For a symphony it proves to be in the unity of themes and thought. Now unmuted and unrestrained in conflict of crashing chords, the trumpet blows again the motto of the roving sea. In various figures is the

pelagic motion, in continuous coursing strings, in the sweeping phrase of the wood-wind, or in the original wave-motion of the horns, now unmuted.

The main burden is a plaint



(in the wood) against the insistent surge (of strings), on a haunting motive as of farewell or eventide, with much stress of pathos. It is sung in sustained duet against a constant churning figure of the sea, and it is varied by a dulcet strain that grows out of the wave-motive.

Indeed, the whole movement is complementary of the first, the obverse as it were. The themes are of the same text; the hue and mood have changed from the spring of dawn to the sadness of dusk. The symbol of noontide peace reappears with minor tinge, at the hush of eve. The climactic motive of the sea acclaiming the rising sun is there, but reversed.

The sea too has the same tempestuous motion (in-

deed, the plaintive song is mainly of the wind), unrestrained by the sadder mood. At the passionate climax, where the higher figure sinks toward the rising lower, it is as if the Wind kissed the Sea.

The concluding scene begins as in the first movement, save with greater extension of expressive melody. And the poignant note has a long song against a continuous rippling (of harps).

More elemental figures crowd the scene; the first melody (of trumpet) has a full verse, and the dulcet phrase (of wave-motive).

Toward the end the plaintive song has an ever-growing chorus of acclaiming voices. In the fever of united coursing motion the phrase loses the touch of sadness until in eager, spirited pace, as of galloping steeds, it ends with a shout of victory.

DUKAS. "THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE"

Chief among the companions of Claude Débussy in his adventures is Paul Dukas.* Though he lags somewhat in bold flights of harmonies, he shows a clearer vein of melody and rhythm, and he has an advantage in a greater freedom from the rut of repeated device.

It is somehow in the smaller forms that the French composer finds the trenchant utterance of his fancy. A Scherzo, after the ballad of Goethe, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," tells the famous story of the boy who in his master's absence compels the spirit in

* Born in 1865.

the broom to fetch the water; but he cannot say the magic word to stop the flood, although he cleaves the demon-broom in two.

After the title-page of the score is printed a prose version (by Henri Blaze) of Goethe's ballad, "Der Zauberlehrling."

Of several translations the following, by Bowring, seems the best:

THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

I am now,—what joy to hear it!—
Of the old magician rid;
And henceforth shall ev'ry spirit
Do whate'er by me is bid:
I have watch'd with rigor
All he used to do,
And will now with vigor
Work my wonders, too.

Wander, wander
Onward lightly,
So that rightly
Flow the torrent,
And with teeming waters yonder
In the bath discharge its current!

And now come, thou well-worn broom,
And thy wretched form bestir;
Thou hast ever served as groom,
So fulfil my pleasure, sir!
On two legs now stand
With a head on top;
Water pail in hand,
Haste and do not stop!

Wander, wander
Onward lightly,
So that rightly
Flow the torrent,
And with teeming waters yonder
In the bath discharge its current!

See! he's running to the shore,
And has now attain'd the pool,
And with lightning speed once more
Comes here, with his bucket full!
Back he then repairs;
See how swells the tide!
How each pail he bears
Straightway is supplied!

Stop, for lo!
All the measure
Of thy treasure
Now is right!
Ah, I see it! woe, oh, woe!
I forget the word of might.

Ah, the word whose sound can straight
Make him what he was before!
Ah, he runs with nimble gait!
Would thou wert a broom once more!
Streams renew'd forever
Quickly bringeth he;
River after river
Rusheth on poor me!

Now no longer
Can I bear him,
I will snare him,
Knavish sprite!
Ah, my terror waxes stronger!
What a look! what fearful sight!

Oh, thou villain child of hell!
Shall the house through thee be drown'd?
Floods I see that widely swell,
O'er the threshold gaining ground.
Wilt thou not obey,
O thou broom accurs'd!
Be thou still, I pray,
As thou wert at first!

Will enough
Never please thee?
I will seize thee,
Hold thee fast,
And thy nimble wood so tough
With my sharp axe split at last.

See, once more he hastens back!
Now, O Cobold, thou shalt catch it!
I will rush upon his track;
Crashing on him falls my hatchet.
Bravely done, indeed!
See, he's cleft in twain!
Now from care I'm freed,
And can breathe again.

Woe, oh, woe!
Both the parts,
Quick as darts,
Stand on end,
Servants of my dreaded foe!
O ye gods, protection send!

And they run! and wetter still
Grow the steps and grows the hall.
Lord and master, hear me call!
Ever seems the flood to fill.

Ah, he's coming! see,
Great is my dismay!
Spirits raised by me
Vainly would I lay!

"To the side
Of the room
Hasten, broom,
As of old!
Spirits I have ne'er untied
Save to act as they are told."

In paragraphs are clearly pointed the episodes: the boy's delight at finding himself alone to conjure the spirits; the invocation to the water, recurring later as refrain (which in the French is not addressed to the spirit); then the insistent summons of the spirit in the broom; the latter's obedient course to the river and his oft-repeated fetching of the water; the boy's call to him to stop,—he has forgotten the formula; his terror over the impending flood; he threatens in his anguish to destroy the broom; he calls once more to stop; the repeated threat; he cleaves the spirit in two and rejoices; he despairs as two spirits are now adding to the flood; he invokes the master who returns; the master dismisses the broom to the corner.

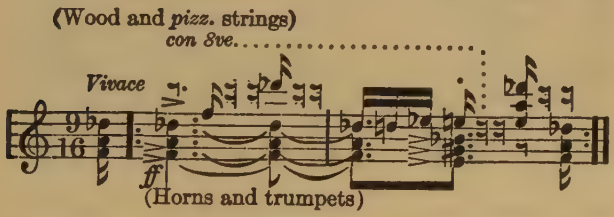
There is the touch of magic in the first harmonics of strings, and the sense of sorcery is always sustained in the strange harmonies.*

* The flageolet tones of the strings seem wonderfully designed in their ghostly sound for such an aerial touch. Dukas uses them later in divided violins, violas and cellos, having thus a triad of harmonics doubled in the octave.

The remaining instruments are: Piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes,

After a mystic descent of eerie chords, a melodious cooing phrase begins in higher wood, echoed from one voice to the other, while the spirit-notes are still sounding.

Suddenly dashes a stream of descending spray, met by another ascending; in the midst the first phrase is rapidly sounded (in muted trumpet). As suddenly the first solemn moment has returned, the phrase has grown in melody, while uncanny harmonies prevail. Amidst a new feverish rush a call rings



loud and oft (in trumpets and horns) ending in an insistent, furious summons. The silence that ensues is as speaking (or in its way as deafening) as were the calls.

After what seems like the grating of ancient joints, set in reluctant motion, the whole tune of the first wooing phrase moves in steady gait, in comic bassoons, to the tripping of strings, further and fuller extended as other voices join. The beginning phrase

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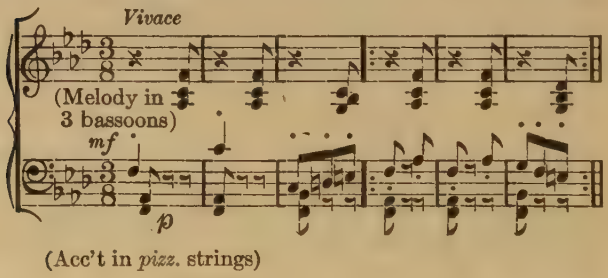
2 clarinets, bass-clarinet, 3 bassoons, contra-bassoon (or contra-bass sarrusophon); 4 horns, 2 trumpets (often muted); 2 cornets-à-pistons; 3 trombones; 3 kettle-drums; harp; glockenspiel; big drum, cymbals and triangle.

of chords recurs as answer. Ever the lumbering trip continues, with strange turn of harmony and color, followed ever by the weird answer. A fuller apparition comes with the loud, though muffled tones of the trumpets. The original tune grows in new turns and folds of melody, daintily tipped with the ring of bells over the light tones of the wood. The brilliant



harp completes the chorus of hurrying voices. Now with full power and swing the main notes ring in sturdy brass, while all around is a rushing and swirling (of harps and bells and wood and strings). And still more furious grows the flight, led by the unison violins.

A mischievous mood of impish frolic gives a new turn of saucy gait. In the jovial answer, chorussed in simple song, seems a revel of all the spirits of rivers and streams.

At the top of a big extended period the trumpet sends a shrill defiant blast.

But it is not merely in power and speed,—more in an infinite variety of color, and whim of tune and

rhythmic harmony, that is expressed the full gamut of disporting spirits. Later, at fastest speed of tripping harp and wood, the brass ring out that first, insistent summons, beneath the same eerie harmonies —and the uncanny descending chords answer as before. But alas! the summons will not work the other way. Despite the forbidding command and all the other exorcising the race goes madly on.

And now, if we are intent on the story, we may see the rising rage of the apprentice and at last the fatal stroke that seemingly hems and almost quells the flood. But not quite! Slowly (as at first) the hinges start in motion. And now, new horror! Where there was one, there are now two ghostly figures scurrying to redoubled disaster. Again and again the stern call rings out, answered by the wildest tumult of all. The shouts for the master's aid seem to turn to shrieks of despair. At last a mighty call o'ermasters and stills the storm. Nothing is heard but the first fitful phrases; now they seem mere echoes, instead of forewarnings. We cannot fail to see the fine parallel, how the masterful command is effective as was the similar call at the beginning.

Significantly brief is the ending, at once of the story and of the music. In the brevity lies the point of the plot: in the curt dismissal of the humbled spirit, at the height of his revel, to his place as broom in the corner. Wistful almost is the slow vanishing until the last chords come like the breaking of a fairy trance.

CHAPTER X

TSCHAIKOWSKY

THE Byron of music is Tschaikowsky for a certain alluring melancholy and an almost uncanny flow and sparkle. His own personal vein deepened the morbid tinge of his national humor.

We cannot ignore the inheritance from Liszt, both spiritual and musical. More and more does the Hungarian loom up as an overmastering influence of his own and a succeeding age. It seems as if Liszt, not Wagner, was the musical prophet who struck the rock of modern pessimism, from which flowed a stream of ravishing art. The national current in Tschaikowsky's music was less potent than with his younger compatriots; or at least it lay farther beneath the surface.

For nationalism in music has two very different bearings. The concrete elements of folk-song, rhythm and scale, as they are more apparent, are far less important. The true significance lies in the motive of an unexpressed national idea that presses irresistibly towards fulfilment. Here is the main secret of the Russian achievement in modern music,—as of other nations like the Finnish. It is the cause that counts. Though Russian song has less striking

traits than Hungarian or Spanish, it has blossomed in a far richer harvest of noble works of art.

Facile, fluent, full of color, Tschaikowsky seems equipped less for subjective than for lyric and dramatic utterance, as in his "Romeo and Juliet" overture. In the "Manfred" Symphony we may see the most fitting employment of his talent. Nor is it unlikely that the special correspondence of treatment and subject may cause this symphony to survive the others, may leave it long a rival of Schumann's "Manfred" music.

With Tschaikowsky feeling is always highly stressed, never in a certain natural poise. He quite lacks the noble restraint of the masters who, in their symphonic lyrics, wonderfully suggest the still waters that run deep.

Feeling with Tschaikowsky was frenzy, violent passion, so that with all abandon there is a touch of the mechanical in his method. Emotion as the content of highest art must be of greater depth and more quiet flow. And it is part or a counterpart of an hysterical manner that it reacts to a cold and impassive mood,—such as we feel in the Andante of the Fourth Symphony.

The final quality for symphonic art is, after all, less the chance flash of inspiration than a big view, a broad sympathy, a deep well of feeling that comes only with great character.

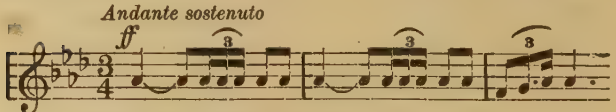
Nay, there is a kind of peril in the symphony for the poet of uncertain balance from the betrayal of his

own temper despite his formal plan. Through all the triumph of a climax as in the first movement of the Fourth Symphony, we may feel a subliminal sadness that proves how subtle is the expression in music of the subjective mood. There is revealed not the feeling the poet is conscious of, but, below this, his present self, and in the whole series of his works, his own personal mettle. What the poet tries to say is very different from what he does say. In a symphony, as in many a frolic, the tinge of latent melancholy will appear.

SYMPHONY NO. 4

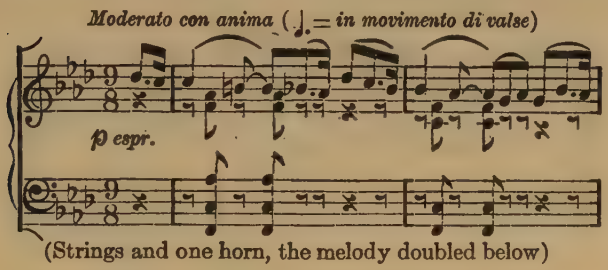
Reverting to a great and fascinating question as to the content of art, we may wonder whether this is not the real tragic symphony of Tschaikowsky, in the true heroic sense, in a view where the highest tragedy is not measured by the wildest lament. There may be a stronger sounding of lower depths with a firmer touch (with less of a conscious kind of abandon),—whence the recoil to serene cheer will be the greater.

There is surely a magnificent aspiration in the first Allegro, a profound knell of destiny and a rare ring of triumph. Underlying all is the legend of trumpets, *Andante sostenuto* (¾), with a dim touch

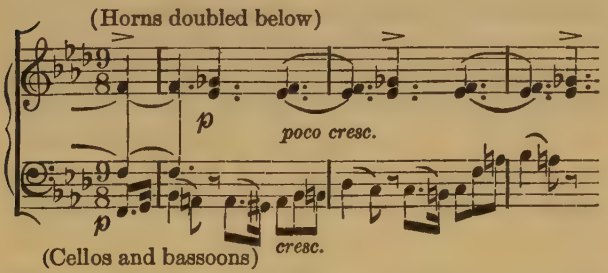


(Horns and bassoons doubled in 8va.)

of tragedy. Opposite in feeling is the descending motive of strings, *Moderato con anima* (⅜). First gently expressive, it soon rises in passion (the original



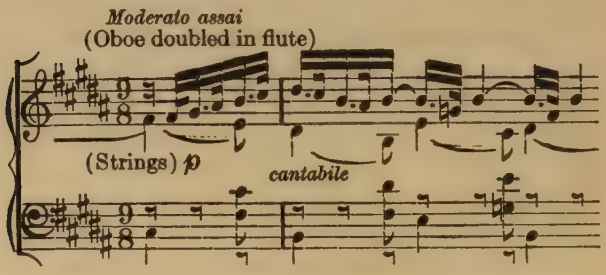
motto always sounding) to a climax whence an ascending motive, in lowest basses, entering in manner of fugue, holds a significant balance with the former. Each in turn rears a climax for the other's



entrance; the first, lamenting, leads to the soothing hope of the second that, in the very passion of its refrain, loses assurance and ends in a tragic burst.

Suddenly a very new kind of solace appears *Dolce*

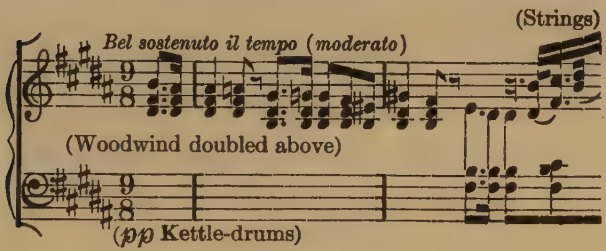
grazioso, in a phrase of the clarinet that leads to a duet of wood and *cantabile* strings, impersonal almost in the sweetness of its flowing song.

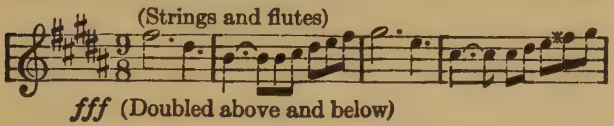


In such an episode we have a new Tschaikowsky,—no longer the subjective poet, but the painter with a certain Oriental luxuriance and grace. It is interesting to study the secret of this effect. The preluding strain lowers the tension of the storm of feeling and brings us to the attitude of the mere observer. The "movement of waltz" now has a new meaning, as of an apparition in gently gliding dance. The step is just sustained in leisurely strings. Above is the simple melodic trip of clarinet, where a final run is echoed throughout the voices of the wood; a slower moving strain in low cellos suggests the real song that presently begins, while high in the wood the lighter tune continues. The ripples still keep spreading throughout the voices, at the end of a line. The tunes then change places, the slower singing above.

With all the beauty, there is the sense of shadowy picture,—a certain complete absence of passion. Now the lower phrase appears in two companion voices (of

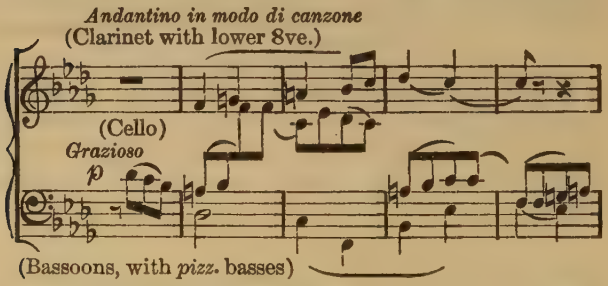
strings), a hymnal kind of duet,—*ben sostenuto il tempo precedente.* Here, very softly in the same timid pace, enters a chorus, on high, of the old sighing motive. Each melody breaks upon the other and

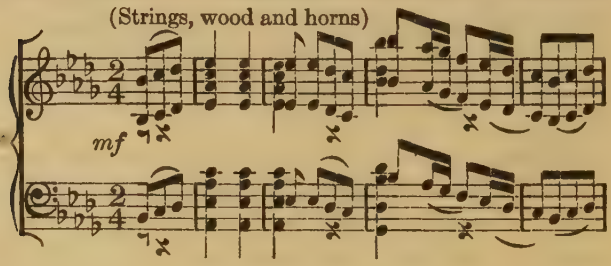


ceases, with equal abruptness. There is no blending, in the constant alternation, until the earlier (lamenting) motive conquers and rises to a new height where a culminating chorale sounds a big triumph, while the sighing phrase merely spurs a new verse of assurance.

A completing touch lies in the answering phrase of the chorale, where the answer of original motto is transformed into a masterful ring of cheer and confidence.

As is the way with symphonies, it must all be sung and striven over again to make doubly sure. Only there is never the same depth of lament after the triumph. In a later verse is an augmented song of the

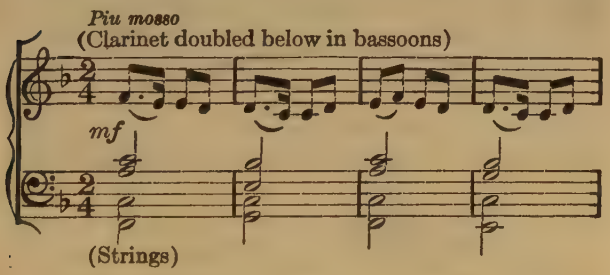
answer of trumpet legend, in duet of thirds, in slow, serene pace, while the old lament sounds below in tranquil echoes and united strains. Before the end, *molto piu vivace,* the answer rings in new joyous rhythm.

Somewhat the reverse of the first movement, in the second the emotional phase grows slowly from the naïve melody of the beginning. Against the main melody that begins in oboe solo (with *pizzicato* strings), *semplice ma grazioso,* plays later a rising

counter-theme that may recall an older strain. The second melody, in Greek mode, still does not depart



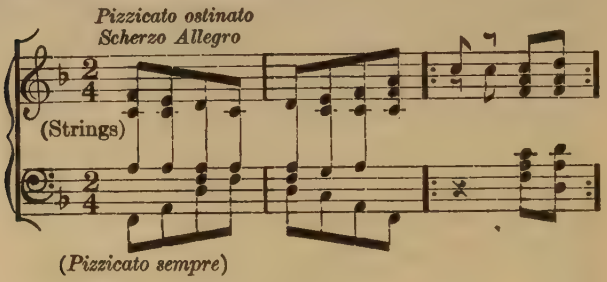
from the naïve mood, or lack of mood. A certain modern trait is in this work, when the feeling vents and wastes itself and yields to an impassive recoil, more coldly impersonal than the severest classic.

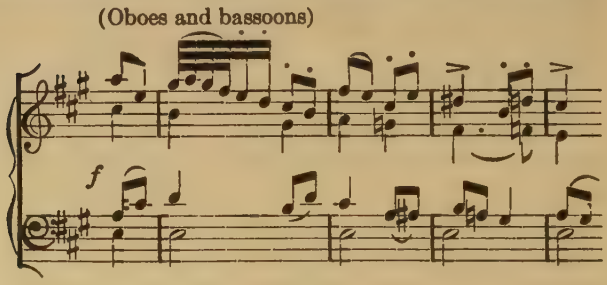
A sigh at the end of the second theme is a first faint reminder of the original lament. Of it is fashioned the third theme. A succeeding climax strongly



brings back the subjective hue of the earlier symphony. A counter-theme, of the text of the second melody of Allegro,—now one above, now the other—is a final stroke. Even the shaking of the trumpet figure is there at the height, in all the brass. Yet as a whole the first melody prevails, with abundant variation of runs in the wood against the song of the strings.

The Scherzo seems a masterly bit of humor, impish, if you will, yet on the verge always of tenderness. The first part is never-failing in the flash and sparkle of its play, all in *pizzicato* strings, with a wonderful

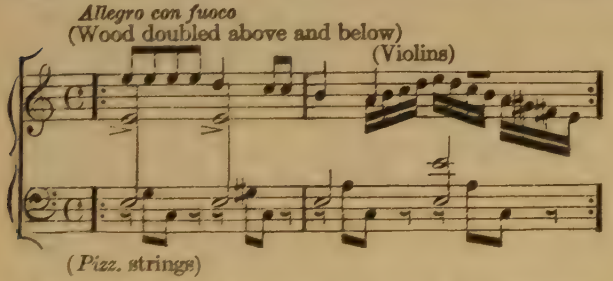
dæmonic quality of the mere instrumental effect. Somewhat suddenly the oboe holds a long note and

then, with the bassoons, has a tune that is almost sentimental. But presently the clarinets make mock-



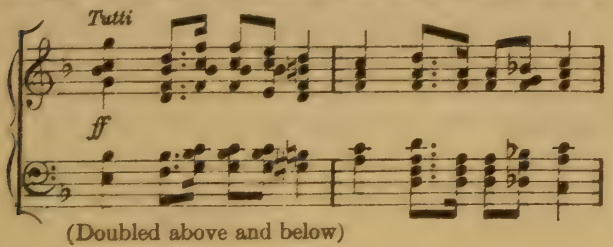
ing retorts. Here, in striking scene, all the brass (but the tuba) very softly blow the first melody with eccentric halts, in just half the old pace except when they take us by surprise. The clarinet breaks in with the sentimental tune in faster time while the brass all the while are playing as before. There are all kinds of pranks, often at the same time. The pic-

colo, in highest treble, inverts the second melody, in impertinent drollery. The brass has still newer surprises. Perhaps the best of the fooling is where strings below and woodwind above share the melody between them, each taking two notes at a time.

The first of the Finale is pure fanfare, as if to let loose the steeds of war; still it recurs as leading idea. There is a kind of sonorous terror, increased by the insistent, regular notes of the brass, the spirited pace of the motive of strings,—the barbaric ring we often hear in Slav music. At the height



the savage yields to a more human vein of joyousness, though at the end it rushes the more wildly into a



series of shrieks of trebles with tramping of basses. The real battle begins almost with a lull, the mere sound of the second tune in the reeds with light strum of strings and triangle. As the theme is redoubled (in thirds of the wood), the sweep of strings of the first motive is added, with chords of horns. A rising figure is now opposed to the descent of the second melody, with shaking of woodwind that brings back the old trumpet legend. Here the storm grows apace, with increasing tumult of entering hostile strains, the main song now ringing in low brass.

In various versions and changes we seem to see earlier themes briefly reappearing. Indeed there is a striking kinship of themes throughout, not so much in outline as in the air and mood of the tunes. This seems to be proven by actual outer resemblance when the motives are developed. Here in a quiet spot—though the battle has clearly not ceased—is the answer of old trumpet motto, that pervaded the first Allegro. There is a strong feeling of the Scherzo here in the *pizzicato* answers of strings. The second theme of the Andante is recalled, too, in the strokes of the second of the Finale. In the thick of the fray is a wonderful maze of versions of the theme, diminished and augmented at the same time with the original pace. Yet it is all a clear flow of melody and rich harmony. The four beats of quarter notes, in the lengthened theme, come as high point like the figure of the leader in battle. A later play of changes is like the sport of the Scherzo. This insensibly leads

to the figure of the fanfare, whence the earlier song returns with the great joyous march.

The final height of climax is distinguished by a stentorian, fugal blast of the theme in the bass, the higher breaking in on the lower, while other voices are raging on the quicker phrases. It is brought to a dramatic halt by the original prelude of trumpet legend, in all its fulness. Though the march-song recurs, the close is in the ruder humor of the main themes.

THE "MANFRED" SYMPHONY

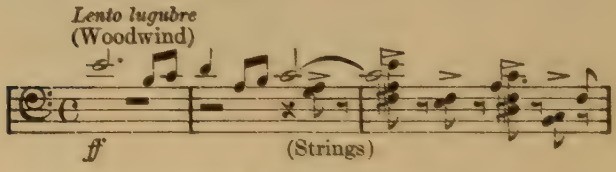
Schumann and Tschaikowsky are the two most eminent composers who gave tonal utterance to the sombre romance of Byron's dramatic poem.* It is interesting to remember that Byron expressly demanded the assistance of music for the work. If we wish to catch the exact effect that is sought in the original conception, Schumann's setting is the nearest approach. It is still debated whether a scenic representation is more impressive, or a simple reading, reinforced by the music.

Tschaikowsky's setting is a "symphony in four pictures, or scenes (*en quatre tableaux*), after Byron's dramatic poem." In the general design and spirit there is much of the feeling of Berlioz's "Fantastic" Symphony, though the manner of the music shows no resemblance whatever. There is much more like-

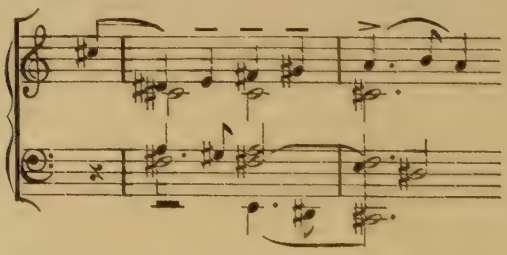
* Prefixed are the familiar lines:
"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

ness to Liszt's "Faust" Symphony, in that the pervading recurrence of themes suggests symbolic labels. Moreover, in the very character of many of the motives, there is here a striking line of descent.

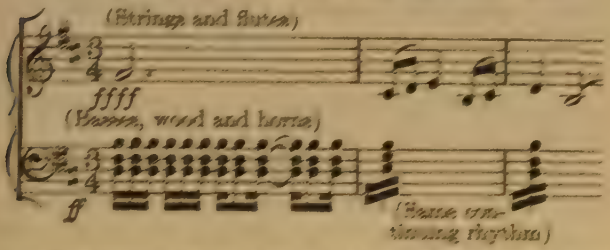
Lento lugubre, the first scene or picture, begins with a theme in basses of reeds:



with later *pizzicato* figure of low strings.

An answering strain is one of the most important of all the melodies:

On these, a bold conflict and climax is reared. If we care to indulge in the bad habit of calling names, we might see "Proud Ambition" in the first motives, intertwined with sounds of sombre discontent. The pace grows *animando,—piu mosso: moderato molto.* Suddenly Andante sings a new, ex-

pressive song, with a distinct cheer of its own, rising to passionate periods and a final height whence, *Andante con dolo*, a loudest chorus of high wood and strings, heralded and accompanied by martial tremolo of low wood, horns, basses, and drums, sound the fateful chant that concludes the first scene, and, toward the close of the work, some the main idea.



The apparition of the Witch of the Alps is pictured in daintiest, sparkling play of strings and wood, with constant recurrence of mobile figures above and below. It seems as if the image of the fountain is fittest and most tempting for mirroring in music. Perhaps the most beautiful, the most haunting, of all the "Manfred" music of Schumann is this same scene of the Witch of the Alps.

Here, with Tschaikowsky, hardly a single note of brass intrudes on this *perpetuum mobile* of light, flashing spray until, later, strains that hark back to the first scene cloud the clear brilliancy of the cascade. Now the play of the waters is lost in the new voices, and a limpid song glides in the violins, with big rhythmic chords of harps, is taken up in

clarinets, and carried on by violins in new melodic verse, *con tenerezza e molto expressione.* Then the whole chorus sing the tune in gentle volume. As it dies away, the music of the falling waters plash as before. The returning song has phases of varying sadness and passion. At the most vehement height,—and here, if we choose, we may see the stern order to retire,—the fatal chant is shrieked by full chorus in almost unison fierceness.

Gradually the innocent play of the waters is heard again, though a gloomy pall hangs over. The chant sounds once more before the end.

The third, "Pastoral," scene we are most free to enjoy in its pure musical beauty, with least need of definite dramatic correspondences. It seems at first as if no notes of gloom are allowed to intrude, as if the picture of happy simplicity stands as a foil to the tragedy of the solitary dreamer; for an early climax gives a mere sense of the awe of Alpine nature.

Still, as we look and listen closer, we cannot escape so easily, in spite of the descriptive title. Indeed, the whole work seems, in its relation to the poem upon which it is based, a very elusive play in a double kind of symbolism. At first it is all a clear subjective utterance of the hero's woes and hopes and fears, without definite touches of external things. Yet, right in the second scene the torrent is clear almost to the eye, and the events pass before us with sharp distinctness. Tending, then, to look on the third as

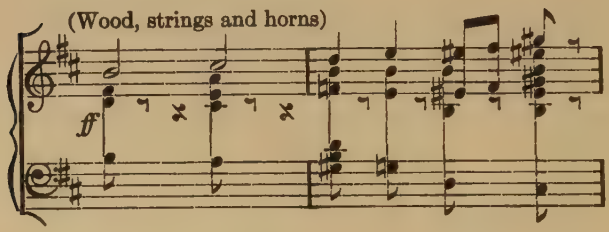
purest pastoral, we are struck in the midst by an ominous strain from one of the earliest moments of the work, the answer of the first theme of all. Here notes of horns ring a monotone; presently a church-bell adds a higher note. The peaceful pastoral airs then return, like the sun after a fleeting storm.

The whole of this third scene of Tschaikowsky's agrees with no special one in Byron's poem, unless we go back to the second of the first act, where Manfred, in a morning hour, alone upon the cliffs, views the mountains of the Jungfrau before he makes a foiled attempt to spring into the abyss. By a direction of the poet, in the midst of the monologue, "the shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard," and Manfred muses on "the natural music of the mountain reed."

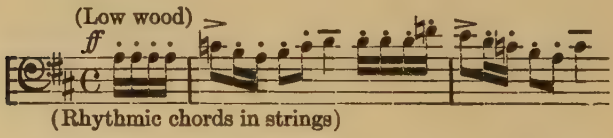
The last scene of the music begins with Byron's fourth of Act II and passes over all the incidents of the third act that precede the hero's death, such as the two interviews with the Abbot and the glorious invocation to the sun.

From Tschaikowsky's title, we must look for the awful gloom of the cavernous hall of Arimanes, Byron's "Prince of Earth and Air." The gray figure from most ancient myth is not less real to us than Mefistofeles in "Faust." At least we clearly feel the human daring that feared not to pry into forbidden mysteries and refused the solace of unthinking faith. And it becomes again a question whether the composer had in mind this subjective

attitude of the hero or the actual figures and abode of the spirits and their king. It is hard to escape the latter view, from the general tenor, the clear-cut outline of the tunes, of which the principal is like a stern chant:



The most important of the later answers lies largely in the basses.



There is, on the whole, rather an effect of gloomy splendor (the external view) than of meditation; a sense of visible massing than of passionate crisis, though there is not wanting a stirring motion and life in the picture. This is to speak of the first part, *Allegro con fuoco.*

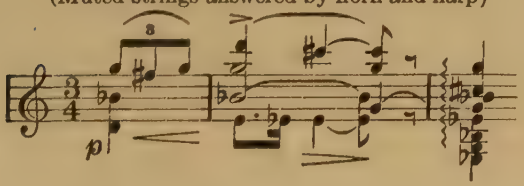
The gloomy dance dies away. *Lento* is a soft fugal chant on elemental theme; there is all the solemnity of cathedral service; after the low-chanted phrase

follows a tremendous blare of the brass. The repeated chant is followed by one of the earliest, characteristic themes of the first scene. And so, if we care to follow the graphic touch, we may see here the intrusion of Manfred, at the most solemn moment of the fearful revel.

As Manfred, in Byron's poem, enters undaunted, refusing to kneel, the first of the earlier phases rings out in fierce *fortissimo*. A further conflict appears later, when the opening theme of the work sounds with interruptions of the first chant of the spirits.

A dulcet plaint follows, *Adagio,* in muted strings, answered by a note of horn and a chord of harp.

Adagio
(Muted strings answered by horn and harp)

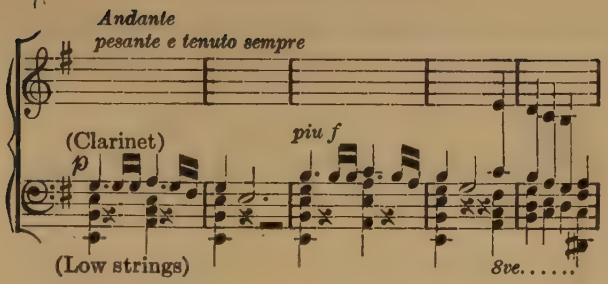


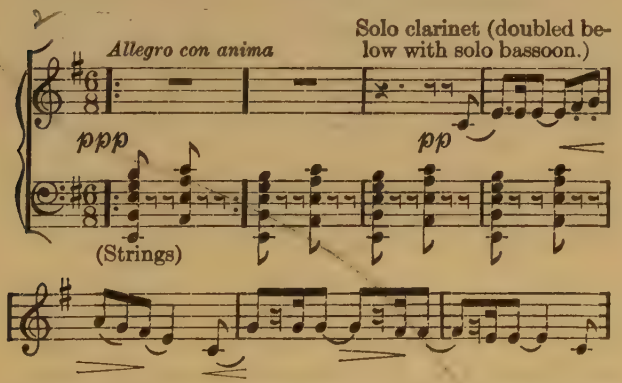
It all harks back to the gentler strains of the first movement. In the ethereal *glissando* of harps we see the spirit of Astarte rise to give the fatal message. The full pathos and passion of the *lento* episode of first scene is heard in brief, vivid touches, and is followed by the same ominous blast with ring of horn, as in the first picture.

A note of deliverance shines clear in the final

phrase of joined orchestra and organ, clearer perhaps than in Manfred's farewell line in the play: "Old man! 'tis not so difficult to die." To be sure, Schumann spreads the same solace o'er the close of his setting, with the Requiem. The sombre splendor of romance is throughout, with just a touch of turgid. In the poignant ecstasy of grief we feel vividly the foreshadowing example of Liszt, in his "Dante" and "Faust" Symphonies.

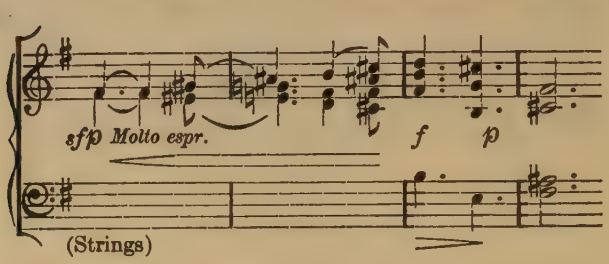
FIFTH SYMPHONY (E MINOR)

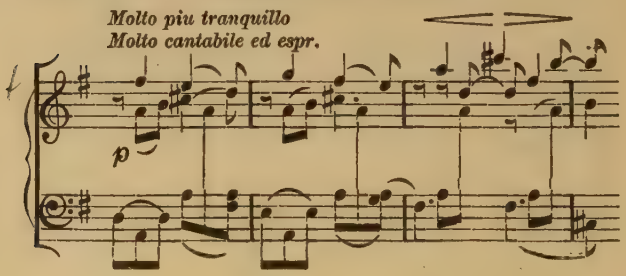
With all the unfailing flow of lesser melodies where the charm is often greatest of all, and the main themes of each movement with a chain of derived phrases, one melody prevails and reappears throughout. The fluency is more striking here than elsewhere in Tschaikowsky. All the external sources,—all the glory of material art seem at his command. We are reminded of a certain great temptation to which all men are subject and some fall,—however reluctantly. Throughout there is a vein of dæmonic. The second (Allegro) melody grows to a high point of pathos,—nay, anguish, followed later by buoyant, strepitant, dancing delight, with the melting answer, in the latest melody. The dæmon is half external fate—in the Greek sense, half individual temper. The end is almost sullen; but the charm is never failing; at the last is the ever springing rhythm.

The march rhythm of the opening Andante is carried suddenly into a quick trip, *Allegro con anima* (6/8), where the main theme of the first movement now begins, freely extended as in a full song of verses. New accompanying figures are added, contrasting phrases or counter-melodies, to the theme.



One expressive line plays against the wilder rhythm of the theme, with as full a song in its own mood as the other. A new rhythmic motive, of great

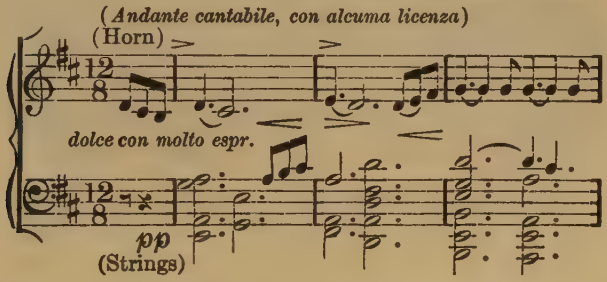
charm, *un pocchetino piu animato,* is answered by a bit of the theme. Out of it all grows, in a clear



welded chain, another episode, where the old rhythm is a mere gentle spur to the new plaint,—*molto piu tranquillo, molto cantabile ed espressivo.*

To be sure, the climax has all of the old pace and life, and every voice of the chorus at the loudest. In the answering and echoing of the various phrases, rhythmic and melodic, is the charm of the discussion that follows. Later the three melodies come again in the former order, and the big climax of the plain-

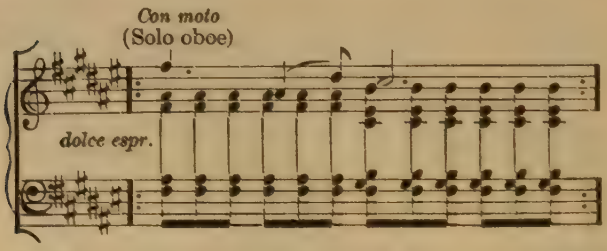
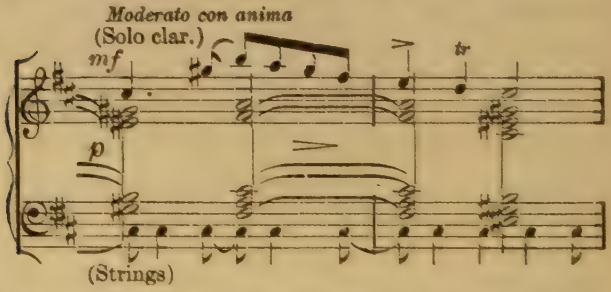
tive episode precedes the end, where the main theme dies down to a whisper.

Andante cantabile, con alcuna licenza. After preluding chords in lowest strings a solo horn begins a



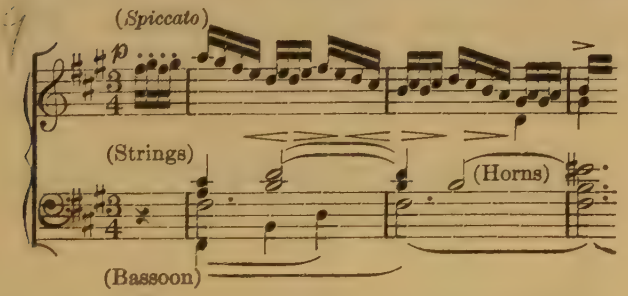
languishing song, *dolce con molto espressione.* It is a wonderful elegy, a yearning without hope, a swan-song of desire, sadder almost than the frank despair of the Finale of the *Pathétique* symphony,—pulsing with passion, gorgeous with a hectic glow of expressive beauty, moving too with a noble grace. Though there is a foil of lighter humor, this is overwhelmed in the fateful gloom of the returning main motto.

The abounding beauty with all its allurement lacks the solace that the masters have led us to seek in the heart of a symphony. The clarinet presently twines a phrase about the tune until a new answer sounds in the oboe, that now sings in answering and chasing duet with the horn.

The phrase of oboe proves to be the main song, in full extended periods, reaching a climax with all the voices.

Well defined is the middle episode in minor reared on a new theme of the clarinet with an almost fugal polyphony that departs from the main lyric mood.

At the height all the voices fall into a united chorus on the original motto of the symphony. The first melodies of the Andante now return with big sweep and power, and quicker phrases from the episode. The motto reappears in a final climax, in the trombones, before the hushed close.

We must not infer too readily a racial trait from the temper of the individual composer. There is here an error that we fall into frequently in the music of such men as Grieg and Tschaikowsky. The prevailing mood of the Pathetic Symphony is in large measure personal. Some of the more recent Russian symphonies are charged with buoyant joyousness. And, indeed, the burden of sadness clearly distinguishes the last symphony of Tschaikowsky from its two predecessors, the Fourth and the Fifth.

The tune of the *valse, Allegro moderato,* is first played by the violins, *dolce con grazia,* with accompanying strings, horns and bassoon. In the second part, with some loss of the lilt of dance, is a subtle design—with a running phrase in *spiccato* strings against a slower upward glide of bassoons. The duet winds on a kind of *crescendo* of modulations. Later



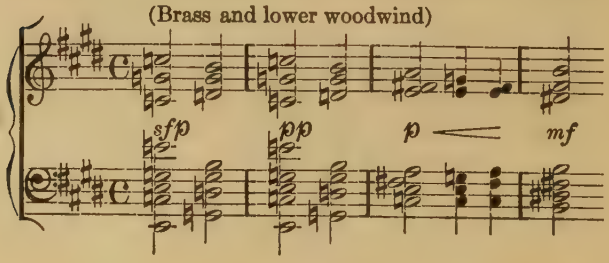
the themes are inverted, and the second is redoubled in speed. The whole merges naturally into the first waltz, with a richer suite of adorning figures. The

dance does not end without a soft reminder (in low woodwind) of the original sombre phrase.

Almost for the first time a waltz has entered the shrine of the symphony. And yet perhaps this dance has all the more a place there. It came on impulse (the way to visit a sanctuary), not by ancient custom. But with all its fine variety, it is a simple waltz with all the careless grace,—nothing more, with no hidden or graphic meaning (as in Berlioz's Fantastic Symphony).

The middle episode, though it lacks the dancing trip, is in the one continuing mood,—like a dream of youthful joys with just a dimming hint of grim reality in the returning motto.

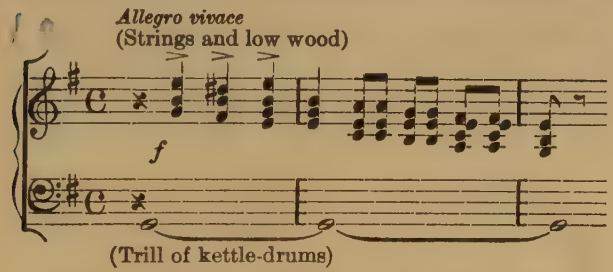
In the Finale the main legend of the symphony is transformed and transfigured in a new, serener mood, and is brought to a full melodic bloom. Indeed, here is the idealization of the original motto. *Andante maestoso* it begins in the tonic major. When the theme ceases, the brass blow the rhythm on a monotone, midst an ascending *obligato of strings.*

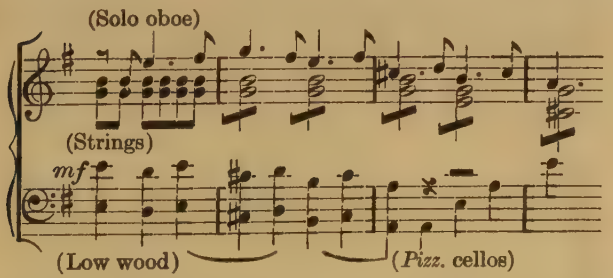


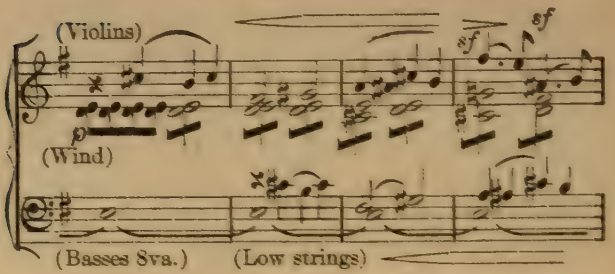
(See page 139, line 1.)

In answer comes a new phrase of chorale. Later the chorale is sounded by the full band, with intermediate beats of rhythmic march.

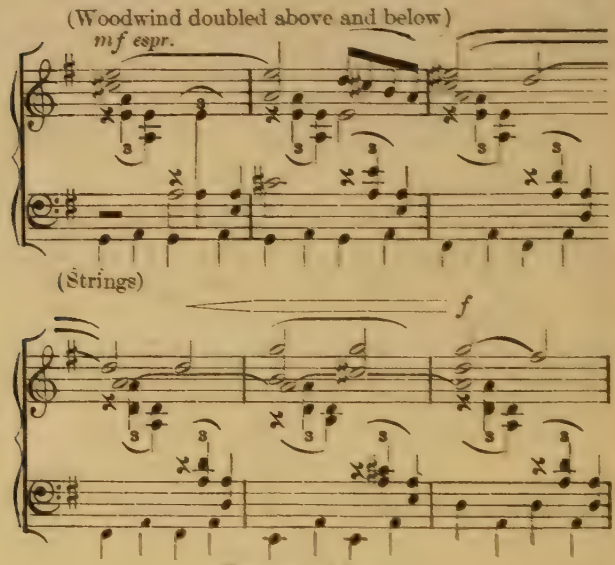
Once more there is a well-marked episode, with a full share of melodic discussion, of clashing themes, of dramatic struggle. First in the tonic minor a theme rises from the last casual cadence in resonant march, *Allegro vivace.* Then follows a duet, almost



a harsh grating of an eccentric figure above against

the smoother course of the latest Allegro motive. The themes are inverted. Presently out of the din rises a charming canon on the prevailing smoother phrase, that soars to a full sweep of song. A new



hymnal melody comes as a final word. Though the main motto returns in big chorus, in full extension, in redoubled pace and wild abandon, still the latest melody seems to contend for the last say. Or, rather,



(See page 141, line 2.)

it is a foil, in its simple flow, to the revel of the motto, now grown into a sonorous, joyous march. And we seem to see how most of the other melodies, —the minor episode, the expressive duet—have sprung from bits of the main text.

To return for another view,—the Finale begins in a mood that if not joyous, is religious. Out of the cadence of the hymn dances the Allegro tune almost saucily. Nor has this charming trip the ring of gladness, though it grows to great momentum. As a whole there is no doubt of the assurance, after the earlier fitful gloom, and with the resignation an almost militant spirit of piety.

In the dulcet canon, an exquisite gem, bliss and sadness seem intermingled; and then follows the crowning song, broad of pace, blending the smaller rhythms in ecstatic surmounting of gloom. In further verse it doubles its sweet burden in overlapping voices, while far below still moves the rapid trip.

But the motto will return, in major to be sure, and tempered in mercy. And the whole hymn dominates, with mere interludes of tripping motion, breaking at the height into double pace of concluding strain. Before falling back into the thrall of the legend the furious race rushes eagerly into the deepest note of bliss, where in sonorous bass rolls the broad, tranquil song. And though the revel must languish, yet we attend the refrain of all the melodies in crowning rapture. Then at last, in stern minor,

sounds the motto, still with the continuing motion, in a loud and long chant.

In blended conclusion of the contending moods comes a final verse of the legend in major, with full accoutrement of sounds and lesser rhythm, in majestic pace. And there is a following frolic with a verse of the serene song. The end is in the first Allegro theme of the symphony, in transfigured major tone.

We must be clear at least of the poet's intent. In the Fifth Symphony Tschaikowsky sang a brave song of struggle with Fate.

CHAPTER XI

THE NEO-RUSSIANS

FOR some mystic reason nowhere in modern music is the symphony so justified as in Russia. Elsewhere it survives by the vitality of its tradition. In France we have seen a series of works distinguished rather by consummate refinement than by strength of intrinsic content. In Germany since the masterpieces of Brahms we glean little besides the learnedly facile scores of a Bruckner, with a maximum of workmanship and a minimum of sturdy feeling,—or a group of "heroic" symphonies all cast in the same plot of final transfiguration. The one hopeful sign is the revival of a true counterpoint in the works of Mahler.

Some national song, like the Bohemian, lends itself awkwardly to the larger forms. The native vein is inadequate to the outer mould, that shrinks and dwindles into formal utterance. It may be a question of the quantity of a racial message and of its intensity after long suppression. Here, if we cared to enlarge in a political disquisition, we might account for the symphony of Russians and Finns, and of its absence in Scandinavia. The material elements, abundant rhythm, rich color, individual and varied folk-song, are only the means by which the national

temper is expressed. Secondly, it must be noted as a kind of paradox, the power of the symphony as a national utterance is increased by a mastery of the earlier classics. With all that we hear of the narrow nationalism of the Neo-Russians, we cannot deny them the breadth that comes from a close touch with the masters. Mozart is an element in their music almost as strong as their own folk-song. Here, it may be, the bigger burden of a greater national message unconsciously seeks the larger means of expression. And it becomes clear that the sharper and narrower the national school, the less complete is its utterance, the more it defeats its ultimate purpose.

The broad equipment of the new Russian group is seen at the outset in the works of its founder, Balakirew. And thus the difference between them and Tschaikowsky lay mainly in the formulated aim.*

The national idea, so eminent in modern music, is not everywhere equally justified. And here, as in an object-lesson, we see the true merits of the problem. While one nation spontaneously utters its cry, another, like a cock on the barnyard, starts a movement in mere idle vanity, in sheer self-glorification.

In itself there is nothing divine in a national idea that needs to be enshrined in art. Deliberate segre-

* In the choice of subjects there was a like breadth. Balakirew was inspired by "King Lear," as was Tschaikowsky. And amid a wealth of Slavic legend and of kindred Oriental lore, he would turn to the rhythms of distant Spain for a poetic theme.

gation is equally vain, whether it be national or social. A true racial celebration must above all be spontaneous. Even then it can have no sanction in art, unless it utter a primal motive of resistance to suppression, the elemental pulse of life itself. There is somehow a divine dignity about the lowest in human rank, whether racial or individual. The oppressed of a nation stands a universal type, his wrongs are the wrongs of all, and so his lament has a world-wide appeal. And in truth from the lowest class rises ever the rich spring of folk-song of which all the art is reared, whence comes the paradox that the peasant furnishes the song for the delight of his oppressors, while they boast of it as their own. Just in so far as man is devoid of human sympathy, is he narrow and barren in his song. Music is mere feeling, the fulness of human experience, not in the hedonic sense of modern tendencies, but of pure joys and profound sorrows that spring from elemental relations, of man to man, of mate to mate.

Here lies the nobility of the common people and of its song; the national phase is a mere incident of political conditions. The war of races is no alembic for beauty of art. If there were no national lines, there would still be folk-song,—merely without sharp distinction. The future of music lies less in the differentiation of human song, than in its blending.

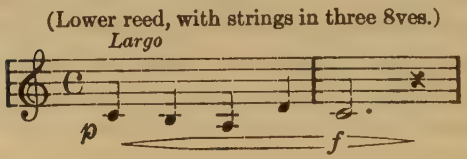
Thus we may rejoice in the musical utterance of a race like the Russian, groaning and struggling through ages against autocracy for the dignity of man

himself,—and in a less degree for the Bohemian, seeking to hold its heritage against enforced submergence. But we cannot take so seriously the proud self-isolation of other independent nations.

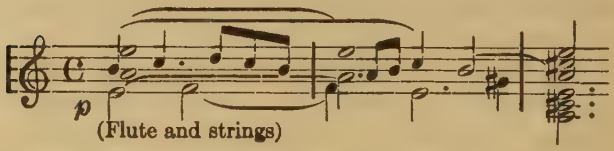
BALAKIREW. SYMPHONY IN C*

The national idea shines throughout, apart from the "Russian Theme" that forms the main text of the Finale. One may see the whole symphony leading up to the national celebration.

As in the opening phrase (in solemn *Largo*) with



its answer are proclaimed the subjects that presently



appear in rapid pace, so the whole movement must be taken as a big prologue, forecasting rather than realizing. There is a dearth of melodic stress and

* Mili Alexeivich Balakirew was born at Nizhni-Novgorod in 1836; he died at St. Petersburg in 1911. He is regarded as the founder of the Neo-Russian School.

balance; so little do the subjects differ that they are in essence merely obverse in outline.

Mystic harmonies and mutations of the motto lead to a quicker guise (*Allegro vivo*). Independently of themes, the rough edge of tonality and the vigorous primitive rhythms are expressive of the Slav feeling. Withal there is a subtlety of harmonic manner that could come only through the grasp of the classics common to all nations. Augmentation and diminution of theme abound, together with the full fugal manner. A warm, racial color is felt in the prodigal use of lower reeds.*

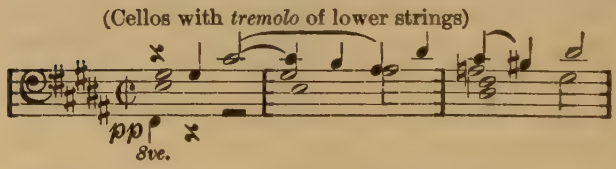
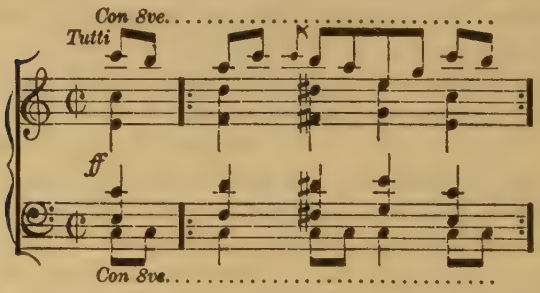
In all the variety of quick and slower melodies a single phrase of five notes, the opening of the symphony, pervades. In all kinds of humor it sings, martial, solemn, soothing, meditative, or sprightly. Poetic in high degree is this subtle metamorphosis, so that the symphony in the first movement seems to prove the art rather than the national spirit of the Neo-Russians.

Of the original answer is wrought all the balance and foil of second theme, and like the first it reaches a climactic height. But the first is the sovereign figure of the story. It enters into the pattern of every new phase, it seems the text of which all the melodies are fashioned, or a sacred symbol that must be all-pervading. In a broader pace (*Alla breve*)

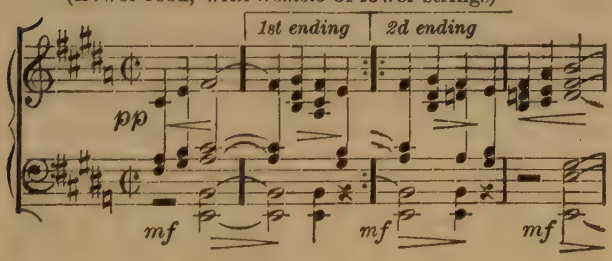
* Besides the English horn and four bassoons there are four clarinets,—double the traditional number.

is a mystic discussion of the legend, as of dogma, ending in big pontifical blast of the answering theme.

The whole movement is strangely frugal of joyous abandon. Instead of rolling, revelling melody there is stern proclamation, as of oracle, in the solemn pauses. The rhythm is purposely hemmed and broken. Restraint is everywhere. Almost the only continuous thread is of the meditative fugue.

A single dulcet lyric verse (of the motto) is soon

banished by a sudden lively, eccentric phrase that has an air of forced gaiety, with interplay of mystic symbols. At last, on a farther height, comes the first

joyous abandon (in a new mask of the motto), recurring anon as recess from sombre brooding.

Here the second subject has a free song,—in gentle chase of pairs of voices (of woodwind and muted strings and harp) and grows to alluring melody. As



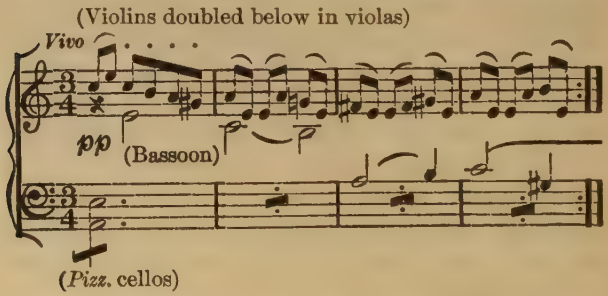
from a dream the eccentric trip awakens us, on ever higher wing. At the top in slower swing of chords horn and reeds chant the antiphonal legend, and in growing rapture, joined by the strings, rush once more into the jubilant revel, the chanting legend still sounding anon in sonorous bass.

The climax of feeling is uttered in a fiery burst of all the brass in the former dulcet refrain from the motto. In full sweep of gathering host it flows in unhindered song. Somehow by a slight turn, the tune is transformed into the alluring melody of the second theme. When the former returns, we feel that both strains are singing as part of a single song and that the two subjects are blended and reconciled in rapture of content.

A new mystic play of the quicker motto, answered by the second theme, leads to an overpowering blast

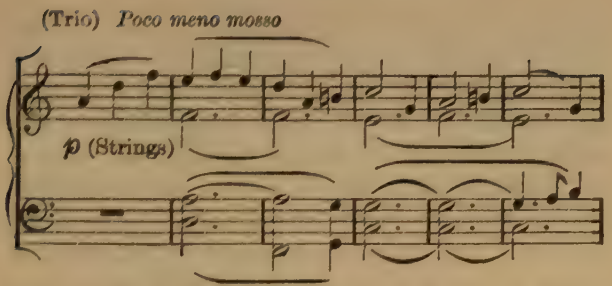
of the motto in slowest notes of brass and reed, ending in a final fanfare.

All lightness is the Scherzo, though we cannot escape a Russian vein of minor even in the dance. A rapid melody has a kind of perpetual motion in the strings, with mimicking echoes in the wood. But the strange part is how the natural accompanying voice below (in the bassoon) makes a haunting melody of

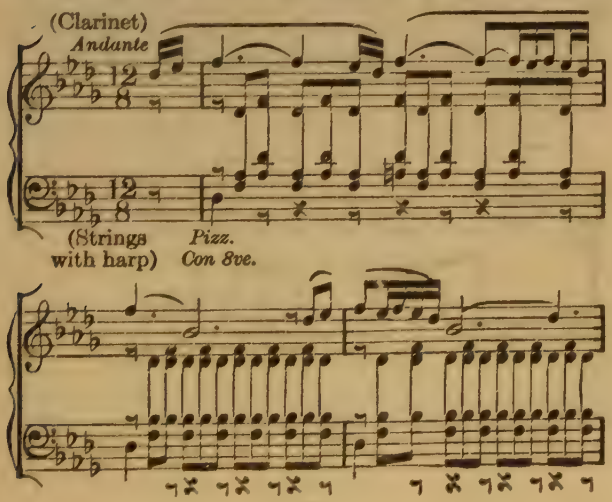


its own,—especially when they fly away to the major. As we suspected, the lower proves really the principal song as it winds on in the languorous English horn or in the higher reed. Still the returning dance has now the whole stage in a long romp with strange peasant thud of the brass on the second beat. Then the song rejoins the dance, just as in answering glee, later in united chorus.

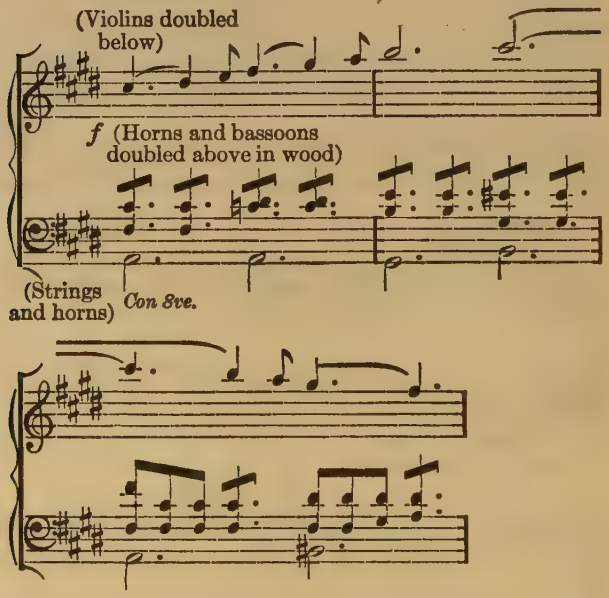
A quieter song (that might have been called the Trio) has still a clinging flavor of the soil,—as of a folk-ballad, that is not lost with the later madrigal nor with the tripping figure that runs along.

Strangely, after the full returning dance, an epi-

logue of the ballad appears over a drone, as of bagpipe, through all the harmony of the madrigal. Strangest of all is the playful last refrain in the high piccolo over the constant soft strumming strings.

The Andante, in pure lyric mood, is heavily charged with a certain Oriental languor. The clari-



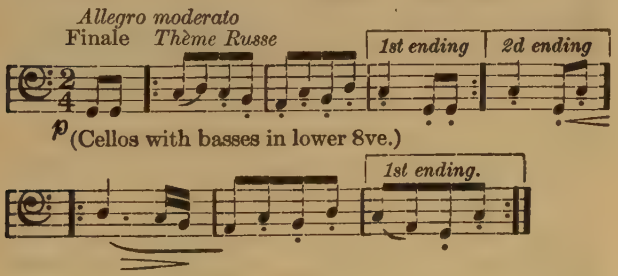
net leads the song, to rich strum of harp and strings, with its note of sensuous melancholy. Other, more external signs there are of Eastern melody, as in the graceful curl of quicker notes. Intermediate strains between the verses seem gently to rouse the slumbering feeling,—still more when they play between the lines of the song. The passion that is lulled in the languor of main melody, is somehow uttered in the later episode,—still more in the dual song of both



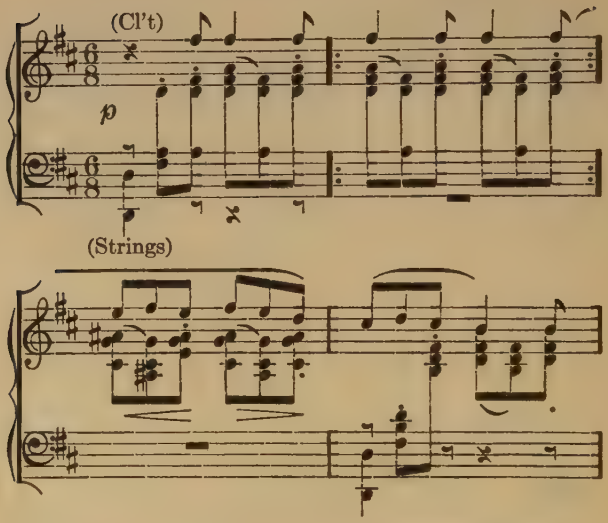
melodies,—though it quickly drops before a strange coquetry of other strains. Yet the climax of the

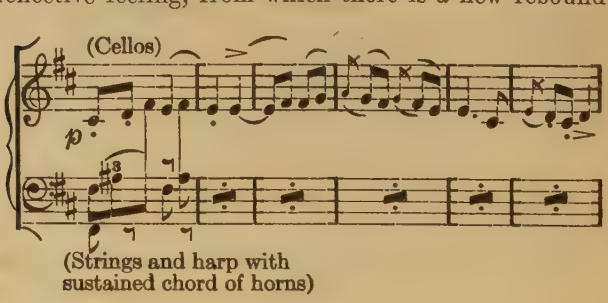
main song is reached when the lighter phrase rings fervently in the high brass. Here the lyric beauty is stressed in a richer luxuriance of rhythmic setting. Once more sings the passionate tune; then in midst of the last verse of the main song is a quick alarm of rushing harp. The languorous dream is broken; there is an air of new expectancy. Instead of a close is a mere pause on a passing harmony at the portals of the high festival.

With a clear martial stress the "Russion Theme" is sounded (in low strings), to the full a national



tune of northern race. Enriched with prodigal harmony and play of lesser themes it flows merrily on, yet always with a stern pace, breaking out at last in a blare of warlike brass.

Nor does the martial spirit droop in the second tune, though the melodies are in sheer contrast. In faster rhythm, the second is more festal so that the first returning has a tinge almost of terror. An

after-strain of the second has a slightest descent to reflective feeling, from which there is a new rebound



to the buoyant (festal) melody.

Here in grim refrains, in dim depths of basses

(with hollow notes of horns) the national tune has a free fantasy until it is joined by the second in a loud burst in the minor.

Now the latter sings in constant alternation with the answering strain, then descends in turn into the depths of sombre musing. There follows a big, resonant dual climax (the main theme in lower brass), with an edge of grim defiance. In the lull we seem to catch a brief mystic play of the first motto of the symphony (in the horns) before the last joyous song of both melodies,—all with a power of intricate design and a dazzling brilliancy of harmony, in proud national celebration.

A last romp is in polacca step on the tune of the Russian Theme.

RIMSKY-KORSAKOW. "ANTAR," SYMPHONY*

The title-page tells us that "the subject is taken from an Arabian tale of Sennkowsky." Opposite the beginning of the score is a summary of the story, in Russian and in French, as follows:

I.—Awful is the view of the desert of Sham; mighty in their desolation are the ruins of Palmyra, the city razed by the spirits of darkness. But Antar, the man of the desert, braves them, and dwells serenely in the midst of the scenes of destruction. Antar has forever forsaken the company of mankind. He has sworn eternal hatred on account of the evil they returned him for the good which he intended.

Suddenly a charming, graceful gazelle appears. Antar

* Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakow, Russian, 1844–1908.

starts to pursue it. But a great noise seems pulsing through the heavens, and the light of day is veiled by a dense shadow. It is a giant bird that is giving chase to the gazelle.

Antar straightway changes his intent, and attacks the monster, which gives a piercing cry and flies away. The gazelle disappears at the same time, and Antar, left alone in the midst of ruins, soon goes to sleep while meditating on the event that has happened.

He sees himself transported to a splendid palace, where a multitude of slaves hasten to serve him and to charm his ear with their song. It is the abode of the Queen of Palmyra.—the fairy Gul-nazar. The gazelle that he has saved from the talons of the spirit of darkness is none other than the fairy herself. In gratitude Gul-nazar promises Antar the three great joys of life, and, when he assents to the proffered gift, the vision vanishes and he awakes amid the surrounding ruins.

II.—The first joy granted by the Queen of Palmyra to Antar are the delights of vengeance.

III.—The second joy—the delights of power.

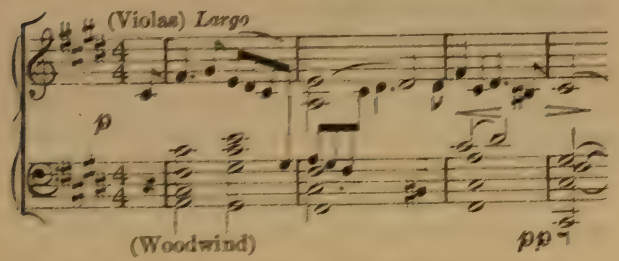
IV.—Antar has returned to the fallen remains of Palmyra. The third and last gift granted by the fairy to Antar is the joy of true love. Antar begs the fairy to take away his life as soon as she perceives the least estrangement on his side, and she promises to do his desire.

After a long time of mutual bliss the fairy perceives, one day, that Antar is absent in spirit and is gazing into the distance. Straightway, divining the reason, she passionately embraces him. The fire of her love enflames Antar, and his heart is consumed away.

Their lips meet in a last kiss and Antar dies in the arms of the fairy.

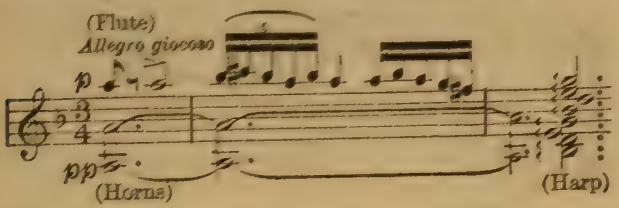
The phases of the story are clear in the chain of musical scenes, of the movements themselves and

within them. In the opening Largo that recurs in this movement between the visions and happenings, a melody appears (in violas) that moves in all the



acts of the tragedy. It is clearly the Antar motive,—here amidst ruin and desolation.

The fairy theme is also unmistakable, that first plays in the flute, against soft horns, *Allegro giocoso,*



and is lost in the onrushing attack, *furioso,* of a strain that begins in murmuring of muted strings.

Other phrases are merely graphic or incidental. But the Antar motive is throughout the central moving figure.

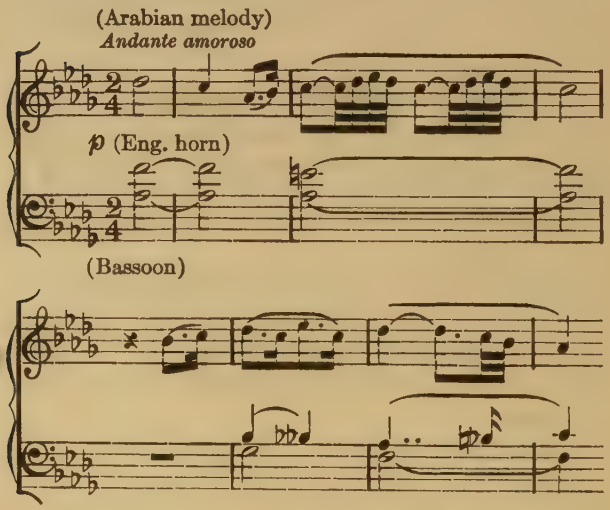
The scene of the desert returns at the end of the movement.

In the second (*Allegro,* rising to *Molto allegro,*

returning *allargando*) the Antar motive is seldom absent. The ending is in long notes of solo oboe and first violins. There is no trace of the fairy queen throughout the movement.

The third movement has phases of mighty action (as in the beginning, *Allegro risoluto alla Marcia*), of delicate charm, and even of humor. The Antar melody plays in the clangor of big climax in sonorous tones of the low brass, against a quick martial phrase of trumpets and horns. Again there is in this movement no sign of the fairy queen.

In the fourth movement, after a prelude, *Allegretto vivace,* with light trip of high flutes, a melody, of actual Arab origin, sings *Andante amoroso* in the



English horn, and continues almost to the end, broken only by the dialogue of the lover themes. At the close a last strain of the Antar melody is followed by the fairy phrase and soft vanishing chord of harp and strings.

"SCHÉRÉZADE," AFTER "A THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS." SYMPHONIC SUITE

Prefixed to the score is a "program," in Russian and French: "The Sultan Schahriar, convinced of the infidelity of women, had sworn to put to death each of his wives after the first night. But the Sultana Schérézade saved her life by entertaining him with the stories which she told him during a thousand and one nights. Overcome by curiosity, the Sultan put off from day to day the death of his wife, and at last entirely renounced his bloody vow.

Many wonders were told to Schahriar by the Sultana Schérézade. For the stories the Sultana borrowed the verses of poets and the words of popular romances, and she fitted the tales and adventures one within the other.

I. The Sea and the Vessel of Sindbad.

II. The Tale of the Prince Kalender.

III. The Young Prince and the Young Princess.

IV. Feast at Bagdad. The Sea. The Vessel is Wrecked on a Rock on which is Mounted a Warrior of Brass. Conclusion."

With all the special titles the whole cannot be re-

garded as close description. It is in no sense narrative music. The titles are not in clear order of events, and, moreover, they are quite vague.

In the first number we have the sea and merely the vessel, not the voyages, of Sindbad. Then the story of the Prince Kalender cannot be distinguished among the three tales of the royal mendicants. The young prince and the young princess,—there are many of them in these Arabian fairy tales, though we can guess at the particular one. Finally, in the last number, the title mentions an event from the story of the third Prince Kalender, where the vessel (not of Sindbad) is wrecked upon a rock surmounted by a warrior of brass. The Feast of Bagdad has no special place in any one of the stories.

The truth is, it is all a mirroring in tones of the charm and essence of these epic gems of the East. It is not like the modern interlinear description, although it might be played during a reading on account of the general agreement of the color and spirit of the music. But there is the sense and feeling of the story, *das Märchen,* and the romance of adventure. The brilliancy of harmony, the eccentricity and gaiety of rhythm seem symbolic and, in a subtle way, descriptive. As in the subject, the stories themselves, there is a luxuriant imagery, but no sign of the element of reflection or even of emotion.

I.—The opening motive, in big, broad rhythm, is clearly the Sea. Some have called it the Sindbad

motive. But in essence these are not very different. The Sea is here the very feeling and type of adventure,—nay, Adventure itself. It is a necessary part of fairy stories. Here it begins and ends with its rocking theme, ever moving onward. It comes in the story of the Prince Kalender.

The second of the main phrases is evidently the motive of the fairy tale itself, the feeling of "once upon a time," the idea of story, that leads us to the events themselves. It is a mere strumming of chords of the harp, with a vague line, lacking rhythm, as of musical prose. For rhythm is the type of event, of happenings, of the adventure itself. So the formless phrase is the introduction, the narrator, *Märchen* in an Oriental dress as Schérézade.

The first number passes for the most part in a rocking of the motive of the sea, in various moods and movements: *Largo e maestoso, Allegro non troppo,—tranquillo.* At one time even the theme of the story sings to the swaying of the sea.*

II.—In the tale of the Prince Kalender Schérézade, of course, begins the story as usual. But the main thread is in itself another interwoven tale,—*Andantino Capriccioso, quasi recitando,* with a solo in the bassoon *dolce e espressivo,*—later *poco piu mosso,*

* We remember how Sindbad was tempted after each fortunate escape from terrible dangers to embark once more, and how he tells the story of the seven voyages on seven successive days, amid luxury and feasting.

in violins.* There is most of happenings here. A very strident phrase that plays in the brass *Allegro molto,* may be some hobgoblin, or rather an evil jinn, that holds the princess captive and wrecks the hero's vessel. The sea, too, plays a tempestuous part at the same time with the impish mischief of the jinn.

III.—The third number is the idyll,—both of the stories and of the music. Here we are nearest to a touch of sentiment,—apart from the mere drama of haps and mishaps.† But there are all kinds of

* In the old version the word "Calender" is used; in the new translation by Lane we read of "The Three Royal Mendicants." In certain ancient editions they are called Karendelees,"—*i.e.*, "miserable beggars." Each of the three had lost an eye in the course of his misfortunes. The story (of the Third Kalender) begins with the wreck of the prince's vessel on the mountain of loadstone and the feat of the prince, who shoots the brazen horseman on top of the mountain and so breaks the charm. But there is a long chain of wonders and of troubles, of evil enchantments and of fateful happenings.

† The story, if any particular one is in the mind of the composer, is probably that of the Prince Kamar-ez-Zemán and the Princess Budoor. In the quality of the romance it approaches the legends of a later age of chivalry. In the main it is the long quest and the final meeting of a prince and a princess, living in distant kingdoms. Through the magic of genii they have seen each other once and have exchanged rings. The rest of the story is a long search one for the other. There are good and evil spirits, long journeys by land and sea, and great perils. It is an Arab story of the proverbial course of true love.

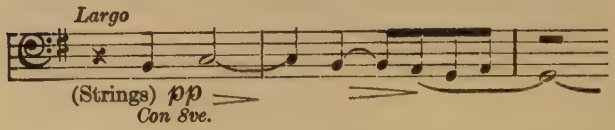
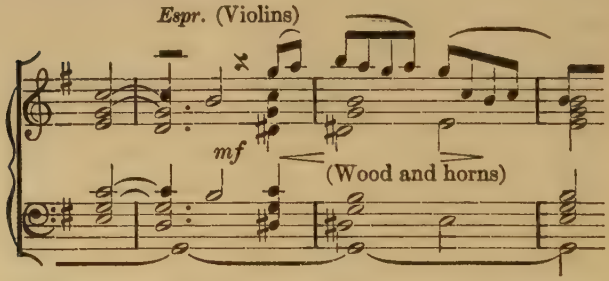
special events. There is no prelude of the narrator. The idyll begins straightway, *Andantino quasi allegretto,* winds through all kinds of scenes and storms, then sings again *dolce e cantabile.* Here, at last, the Schérézade phrase is heard on the violin solo, to chords of the harp; but presently it is lost in the concluding strains of the love story.

IV.—The last number begins with the motive of the sea, like the first, but *Allegro molto,* again followed by the phrase of the story teller. The sea returns *Allegro molto e frenetico* in full force, and likewise the vague motive of the story in a cadenza of violin solo. Then *Vivo* comes the dance, the pomp and gaiety of the Festival, with tripping tambourine and strings and the song first in the flutes.* Presently a reminder of the sea intrudes,—*con forza* in lower wood and strings. But other familiar figures flit by, —the evil jinn and the love-idyll. Indeed the latter has a full verse,—in the midst of the carnival.

Right out of the festival, rather in full festal array, we seem to plunge into the broad movement of the surging sea, *Allegro non troppo e maestoso,* straight on to the fateful event. There are no sighs and tears. Placidly the waves play softly about. And *dolce e capriccioso* the siren Schérézade once more reappears to conclude the tale.

* We may think of the revels of Sindbad before the returning thirst for adventure.

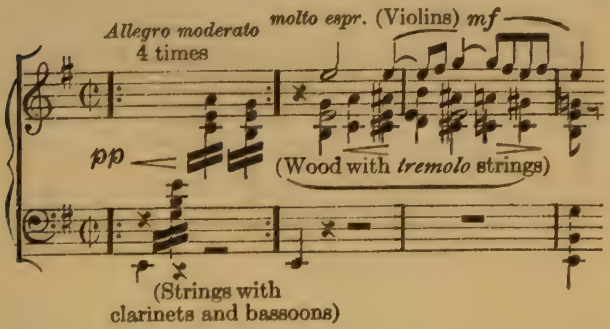
RACHMANINOW. SYMPHONY IN E MINOR *

I.—The symphony begins with the sombre temper of modern Russian art; at the outset it seems to throb with inmost feeling, uttered in subtlest design. The slow solemn prelude (*Largo*) opens with the

chief phrase of the work in lowest strings to ominous chords, and treats it with passionate stress until the main pace of Allegro.

But the germ of prevailing legend lies deeper. The work is one of the few symphonies where the whole is reared on a smallest significant phrase. The first strain (of basses) is indeed the essence of the following melody and in turn of the main Allegro theme. But, to probe still further, we cannot help feeling

* Sergei Rachmaninow, born in 1873.

an ultimate, briefest motive of single ascending tone against intrinsic obstacle, wonderfully expressed in the harmony, with a mingled sense of resolution and regret. And of like moment is the reverse descending tone. Both of these symbols reappear throughout the symphony, separate or blended in larger melody, as principal or accompanying figures. Aside from this closer view that makes clear the tissue of themal discussion, the first phrase is the main melodic motto, that is instantly echoed in violins with piquant harmony. In the intricate path of deep musing we feel the mantle of a Schumann who had himself a kind of heritage from Bach. And thus we come to see the national spirit best and most articulate through the medium of ancient art.

The main Allegro melody not so much grows out of the Largo prelude, as it is of the same fibre and

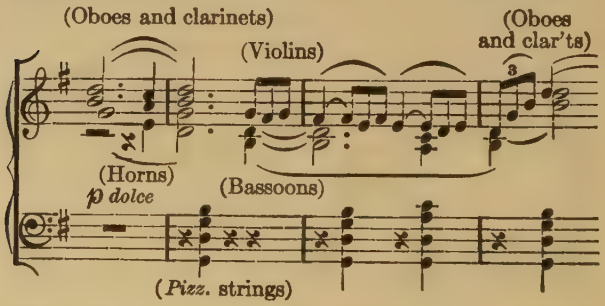


identity. The violins sing here against a stately march of harmonies. Such is the fine coherence

that the mere heralding rhythm is wrought of the first chords of the Largo, with their descending stress. And the expressive melody is of the same essence as the original sighing motto, save with a shift of accent that gives a new fillip of motion. In this movement at least we see the type of real symphony, that throbs and sings and holds us in the thrall of its spirit and song.

Moments there are here of light and joy, quickly drooping to the darker mood. Following the free flight of main melody is a skein of quicker figures, on aspirant pulse, answered by broad, tragic descent in minor tones.

Milder, more tranquil sings now the second melody, a striking embodiment of the sense of striving ascent. Chanted in higher reeds, it is immediately



followed and accompanied by an expressive answer in the strings. On the wing of this song we rise to a height where begins the path of a brief nervous motive (of the first notes of the symphony) that with

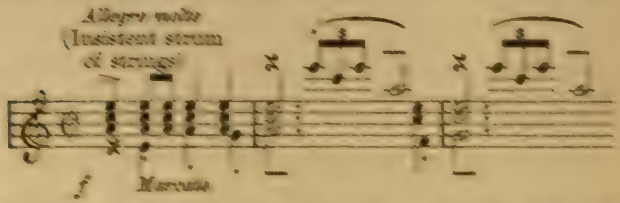
the descending tone abounds in various guise. As a bold glance at the sun is punished by a sight of solar figures all about, so we feel throughout the tonal story the presence of these symbols. An epilogue of wistful song leads to the repeated melodies.

The main figure of the plot that follows is the first melody, now in slow, graceful notes, now in feverish pace, though the brief (second) motive moves constantly here and there. A darkest descent follows into an Avernus of deep brooding on the legend, with an ascending path of the brief, nervous phrase and a reverse fall, that finally wears out its own despair and ends in a sombre verse of the prelude, with new shades of melancholy, then plunges into an overwhelming burst on the sighing phrase. Thence the path of brooding begins anew; but it is now ascendant, on the dual pulse of the poignant motto and the brief, nervous motive. The whole current of passion is thus uttered in the prelude strain that at the outset was pregnant with feeling. At the crisis it is answered or rather interwoven with a guise of the second theme, in hurried pace, chanted by stentorian brass and wood in hallooing chorus that reaches a high exultation. To be sure the Russian at his gladdest seems tinged with sense of fate. So from the single burst we droop again. But the gloom is pierced by brilliant shafts,—herald calls (of brass and wood) that raise the mood of the returning main melody, and in their continuous refrain add a buoyant stimulus. And the verse of quicker figures has a new

fire and ferment. All absent is the former descent of minor tones. Instead, in solemn hush of tempest, without the poignant touch, the tranquil second melody returns with dulcet answer of strings. A loveliest verse is of this further song where, in a dual chase of tune, the melody moves in contained rapture. In the cadence is a transfigured phase of the ascending tone, mingled with the retiring melody, all woven to a soothing cadence.

But the struggle is not over, nor is redemption near. The dulcet phrases sink once more to sombre depth where there is a final, slow-gathering burst of passion on the motto, with a conclusive rug almost of fierce triumph.

II.—The second movement, *Allegro molto*, is a complete change from introspection and passion to an



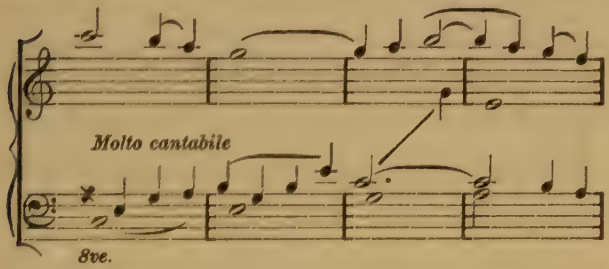
abandon as of primitive dance. Strings stir the feet; the horns blow the first motive of the savage tune; the upper wood fall in with a dashing jungle,—like a stroke of cymbals across the hostile harmonies.

Whether a recurring idiom is merely personal or belongs to the special work is difficult to tell. In reality it matters little. Here the strange rising

tone is the same as in the former (second) melody. In the rude vigor of harmonies the primitive idea is splendidly stressed.

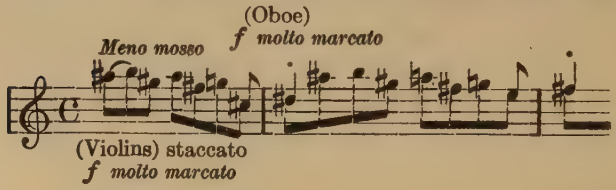
Right in the answer is a guise of short, nervous phrase, that gets a new touch of bizarre by a leap of the seventh from below. In this figure that moves throughout the symphony we see an outward symbol of an inner connection.—Bells soon lend a festive ring to the main tune.

In quieter pace comes a tranquil song of lower voices with a companion melody above,—all in serene major. Though it grew naturally out of the rude

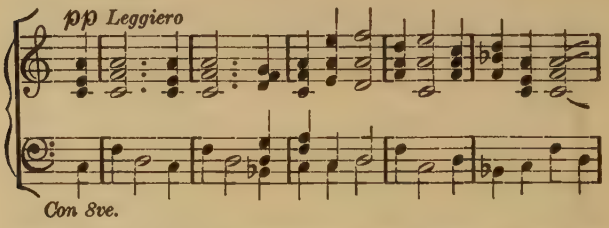


dance, the tune has a contrasting charm of idyll and, too, harks back to the former lyric strains that followed the second melody. When the dance returns, there is instead of discussion a mere extension of main motive in full chorus.

But here in the midst the balance is more than restored. From the dance that ceases abruptly we go straight to school or rather cloister. On our recurring nervous phrase a fugue is rung with all

pomp and ceremony (*meno mosso*); and of the dance there are mere faint echoing memories, when the

fugal text seems for a moment to weave itself into the first tune.

Instead, comes into the midst of sermon a hymnal chant, blown gently by the brass, while other stray

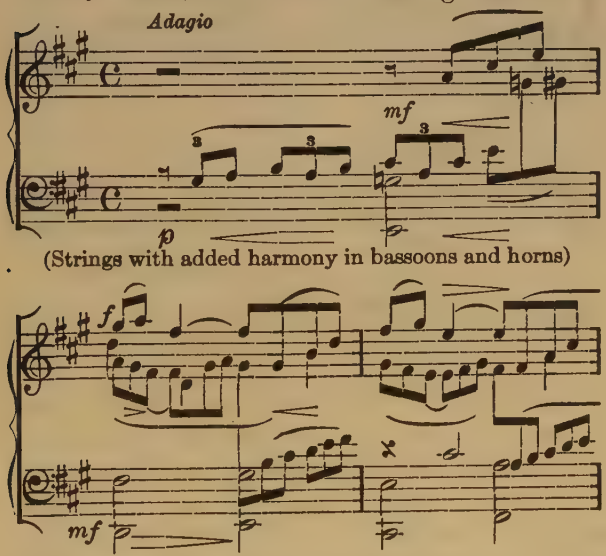


voices run lightly on the thread of fugue. There is, indeed, a playful suggestion of the dance somehow in the air. A final tempest of the fugue * brings us

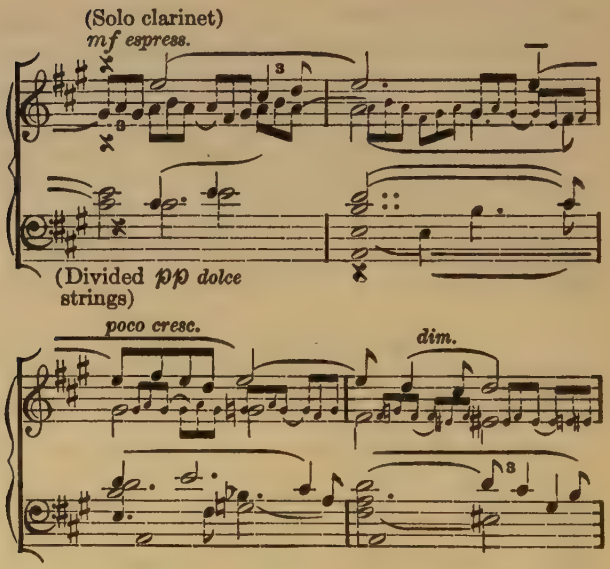
* It is of the first two notes of the symphony that the fugal theme is made. For though it is longer in the strings, the brief motion is ever accented in the wood. Thus relentless is the themal coherence. If we care to look closer we see how the (following) chant is a slower form of the fugal theme, while the bass is in the line of the dance-tune. In the chant in turn we cannot escape a reminder, if not a likeness, of the second theme of the first movement.

back to the full verse of dance and the following melodies. But before the end sounds a broad hymnal line in the brass with a dim thread of the fugue, and the figures steal away in solemn stillness.

III.—The Adagio has one principal burden, first borne by violins,—that rises from the germ of earlier



lyric strains. Then the clarinet joins in a quiet madrigal of tender phrases. We are tempted to find here an influence from a western fashion, a taint of polythemal virtuosity, in this mystic maze of many strains harking from all corners of the work, without a gain over an earlier Russian simplicity. Even the Slavic symphony seems to have fallen into a state of artificial cunning, where all manners of greater



or lesser motives are packed close in a tangled mass.

It cannot be said that a true significance is achieved in proportion to the number of concerting themes. We might dilate on the sheer inability of the hearer to grasp a clear outline in such a multiple plot.

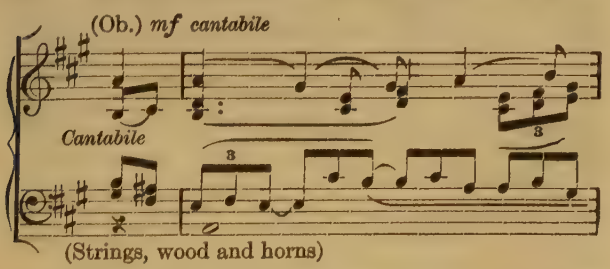
There is somehow a false kind of polyphony, a too great facility of spurious counterpoint, that differs subtly though sharply from the true art where the number entails no loss of individual quality; where the separate melodies move by a divine fitness that measures the perfect conception of the multiple idea; where there is no thought of a later padding to give a shimmer of profound art. It is here that the sym-

phony is in danger from an exotic style that had its origin in German music-drama.

From this point the Rachmaninow symphony languishes in the fountain of its fresh inspiration, seems consciously constructed with calculating care.

There is, after all, no virtue in itself in mere themal interrelation,—in particular of lesser phrases. One cogent theme may well prevail as text of the whole. As the recurring motives are multiplied, they must lose individual moment. The listener's grasp becomes more difficult, until there is at best a mystic maze, a sweet chaos, without a clear melodic thought. It cannot be maintained that the perception of the modern audience has kept pace with the complexity of scores. Yet there is no gainsaying an alluring beauty of these waves of sound rising to fervent height in the main melody that is expressive of a modern wistfulness.

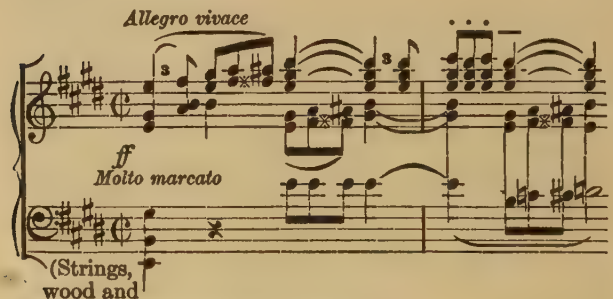
But at the close is a fierce outbreak of the first motto, with a defiance of regret, in faster, reckless pace, brief, but suddenly recurring. Exquisite is this



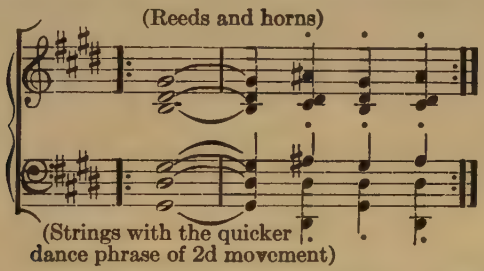
cooing of voices in mournful bits of the motto, with a timid upper phrase in the descending tone.

On we go in the piling of Ossa on Pelion, where the motto and even the Scherzo dance lend their text. Yet all is fraught with sentient beauty as, rising in Titanic climb, it plunges into an overwhelming cry in the Adagio melody. Throughout, the ascending and descending tones, close interwoven, give a blended hue of arduous striving and regret.

After a pause follow a series of refrains of solo voices in the melody, with muted strings, with mingled strains of the motto. In the bass is an undulation that recalls the second theme of former movement. And the clarinet returns with its mystic madrigal of melody; now the Adagio theme enters and gives it point and meaning. In one more burst it sings in big and little in the same alluring harmony, whence it dies down to soothing close in brilliant gamut as of sinking sun.

IV.—Allegro vivace. Throwing aside the clinging

fragments of fugue in the prelude we rush into a gaiety long sustained. Almost strident is the ruthless merriment; we are inclined to fear that the literal

coherence of theme is greater than the inner connection of mood. At last the romp hushes to a whisper of drum, with strange patter of former dance. And following and accompanying it is a new hymnal (or is it martial) line, as it were the reverse of the other



chant. The gay figures flit timidly back,—a struggle 'twixt pleasure and fate,—but soon regain control.

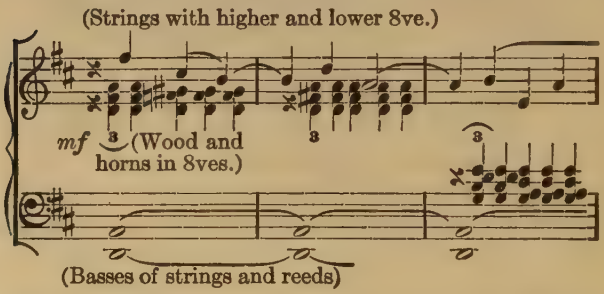
If we cared to interpret, we might find in the Finale a realized aspiration. The truth is the humors of the themal phrases, as of the movements, jar: they are on varying planes. The coarser vein of the last is no solace to the noble grief of the foregoing.

Again the change or series of moods is not clearly defined. They seem a parade of visions. The hymn may be viewed as a guise of the former chant of the Scherzo, with the dance-trip in lowest bass.

Straight from the rush and romp we plunge anew into a trance of sweet memories. The lyric vein here binds together earlier strains, whose kinship had not appeared. They seemed less significant, hidden as subsidiary ideas. If we care to look back we find a germ of phrase in the first Prelude, and then the

answer of the second (Allegro) theme of first movement. There was, too, the sweep of dual melody following the rude dance of Scherzo. Above all is here the essence and spirit of the central Adagio melody of the symphony.

The answering strain is of high beauty, with a melting sense of farewell. From the sad ecstasy is a



descent to mystic musing, where abound the symbols of rising and falling tones. More and more moving is the climactic melody of regret with a blended song in large and little. Most naturally it sinks into a full verse of the Adagio tune—whence instantly is aroused a new battle of moods.

While the dance capers below, above is the sobbing phrase from the heart of the Adagio. The trip falls into the pace of hymnal march. The shadows of many figures return. Here is the big descending scale in tragic minor from the first movement. Large it looms, in bass and treble. Answering it is a figure of sustained thirds that recalls the former second (Allegro) melody. And still the trip of dance goes on.

Sharpest and strongest of all these memories is the big sigh of sombre harmonies from the first Largo prelude, answered by the original legend. And the dance still goes tripping on and the tones rumble in descent.

The dance has vanished; no sound but the drone of dull, falling tones, that multiply like the spirits of the sorcerer apprentice, in large form and small, with the big rumbling in a quick patter as of scurrying mice.

Suddenly a new spirit enters with gathering volume and warmer harmony. As out of a dream we gradually emerge, at the end with a shock of welcome to light and day, as we awake to the returning glad dance. And here is a new entrancing countertune above that crowns the joy.

Once again the skip falls into the ominous descent with the phantom of Scherzo dance in basses. Now returns the strange hymnal line of march and the other anxious hue.

But quickly they are transformed into the tempest of gaiety in full parade. When a new burst is preparing, we see the sighing figure all changed to opposite mood. The grim tune of Scherzo dance enters mysteriously in big and little and slowly takes on a softened hue, losing the savage tinge.

After the returning dance, the farewell melody sings from full throat. Before the ending revel we may feel a glorified guise of the sombre legend of the symphony.

CHAPTER XII

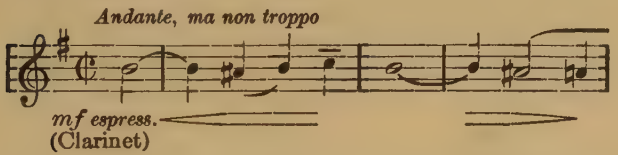
SIBELIUS. A FINNISH SYMPHONY *

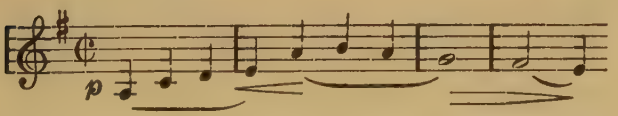
WE must expect that the music of newer nations will be national. It goes without saying; for the music comes fresh from the soil; it is not the result of long refined culture. There is the strain and burst of a burden of racial feeling to utter itself in the most pliant and eloquent of all the languages of emotion. It is the first and noblest sentiment of every nation conscious of its own worth, and it has its counterpart in the individual. Before the utterance has been found by a people, before it has felt this sense of its own quality, no other message can come. So the most glorious period in the history of every country (even in the eyes of other nations) is the struggle for independence, whether successful or not.

All on a new plane is this northernmost symphony, with a crooning note almost of savage, and sudden, fitful bursts from languorous to fiery mood. The harmony, the turn of tune have a national quality, delicious and original, though the Oriental tinge

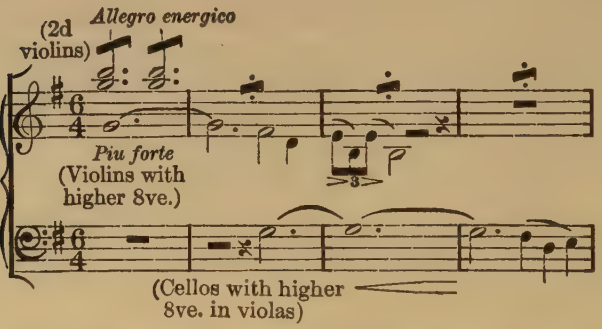
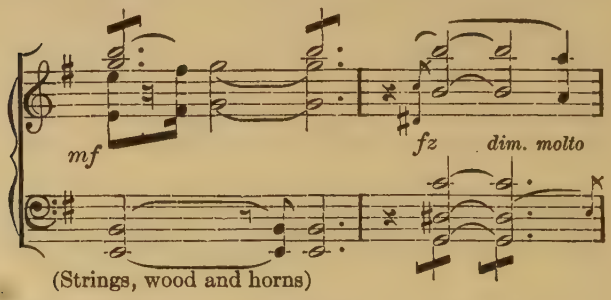
* Symphony No. 1, in E minor, by Jan Sibelius, born in 1865.

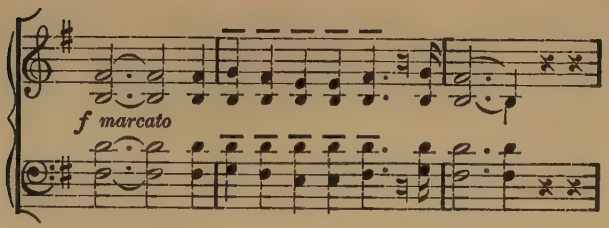
appears, as in Slav and Magyar music, both in bold and in melancholy humor. Though full of strange and warm colors, the harmonic scheme is simple; rather is the work a tissue of lyric rhapsody than the close-woven plot of tonal epic. A certain trace of revery does find a vent in the traditional art of contrary melodies. But a constant singing in pairs is less art than ancient folk-manner, like primal music in the love or dance songs of savages.

The symphony begins with a quiet rhapsody of solo clarinet in wistful minor, clear without chords, though there is a straying into major. There is no accompaniment save a soft roll of drum, and that soon dies away.

The rhapsody seems too vague for melody; yet there are motives, one in chief, winding to a pause; here is a new appealing phrase; the ending is in a



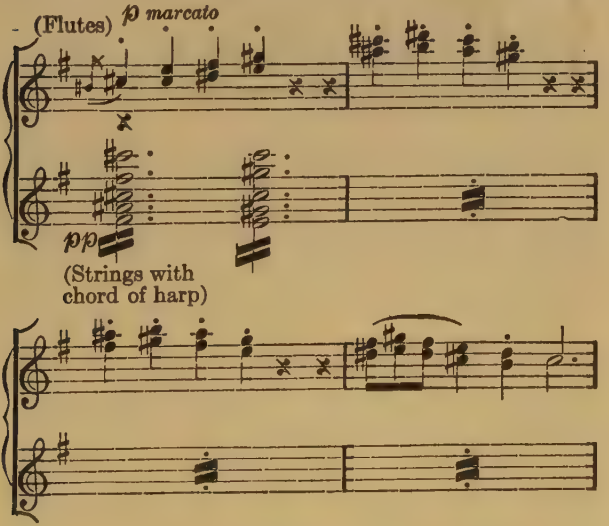
return to the first. Over the whole symphony is cast the hue of this rhapsody, both in mood and in the literal tone.

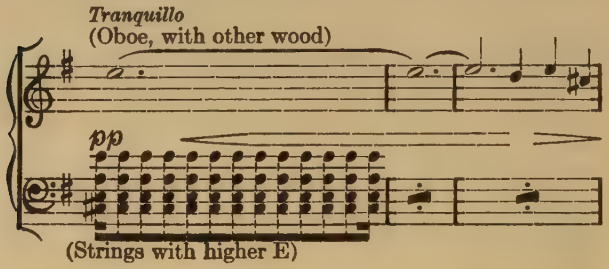
All opposite, with sudden spring of buoyant strings, strikes the Allegro tune ending in a quick, dancing trip. The first voice is immediately pursued by an-

other in similar phase, like a gentler shadow, and soon rises to a passionate chord that is the main idiom of the movement.

A second theme in clear-marked tones of reed and horns, as of stern chant, is taken up in higher wood and grows to graceful melody in flowing strings.



There is a series of flights to an ever higher perch of harmony until the first Allegro motive rings out in fullest chorus, again with the companion tune and the cadence of poignant dissonance.

A new episode comes with shimmering of harp and strings, where rare and dainty is the sense of primal



harmony that lends a pervading charm to the symphony. Here the high wood has a song in constant thirds, right from the heart of the rhapsody, all bedecked as melody with a new rhythm and answer. Soon this simple lay is woven in a skein of pairs of voices, meeting or diverging. But quickly we are back in the trance of lyric song, over palpitating strings, with the refrain very like the former companion phrase that somehow leads or grows to a

rhythmic verse of the first strain of the rhapsody. Here begins a long mystic phase of straying voices (of the wood) in the crossing figures of the song, in continuous fantasy that somehow has merged into the line of second Allegro theme, winging towards a brilliant height where the strings ring out the strain amid sharp cries of the brass in startling hues of harmony and electric calls from the first rhapsody.

From out the maze and turmoil the shadowy melody rises in appealing beauty like heavenly vision and lo! is but a guise of the first strain of rhapsody. It rises amid flashes of fiery brass in bewildering blare of main theme, then sinks again to the depth

of brooding, though the revery of the appealing phrase has a climactic height of its own, with the strange, palpitating harmonies.

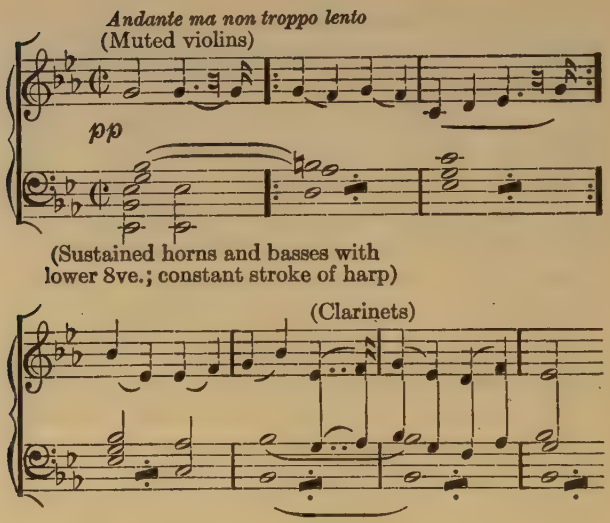
In a new meditation on bits of the first Allegro theme sounds suddenly a fitful burst of the second, that presently emerges in triumphant, sovereign song. Again, on a series of flights the main theme is reached and leaps once more to impassioned height.

But this is followed by a still greater climax of moving pathos whence we descend once more to lyric meditation (over trembling strings). Follows a final tempest and climax of the phrase of second theme.

The movement thus ends, not in joyous exultation, but in a fierce triumph of sombre minor.

The Andante is purest folk-melody, and it is strange ho . we know this, though we do not know the special theme. We cannot decry the race-element as a rich fount of melody. While older nations strive and strain, it pours forth by some mystery in prodigal flow with less tutored peoples who are singing their first big song to the world. Only, the ultimate goal for each racial inspiration must be a greater universal celebration.

The lyric mood is regnant here, in a melody that, springing from distant soil, speaks straight to every heart, above all with the concluding refrain. It is of the purest vein, of the primal fount, deeper than mere racial turn or trait. Moreover, with a whole coronet of gems of modern harmony, it has a broad swing and curve that gives the soothing sense of fire-

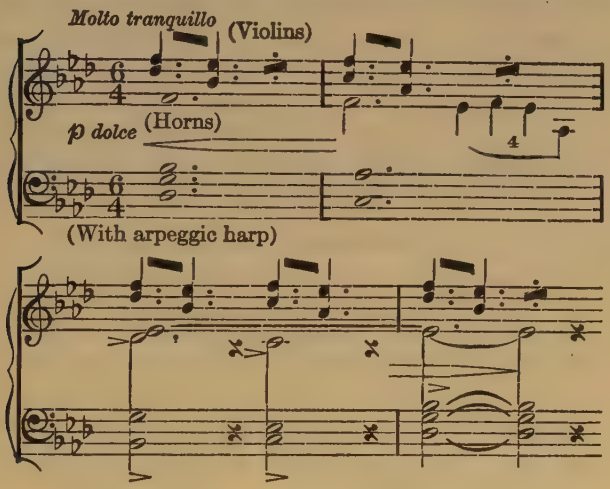

Andante ma non troppo lento
(Muted violins)
pp
(Sustained horns and basses with lower 8ve.; constant stroke of harp)
(Clarinets)

side; it bears a burden of elemental, all-contenting emotion. In the main, the whole movement is one lyric flight. But there come the moods of musing and rhapsodic rapture. In a brief fugal vein is a mystic harking back to the earlier prelude. In these lesser phrases are the foil or counter-figures for the bursts of the melody.

It is the first motive of the main tune that is the refrain in ever higher and more fervent exclamation, or in close pressing chase of voices. Then follows a melting episode,—some golden piece of the melody in plaintive cellos, 'neath tremulous wood or delicate choirs of strings.

But there is a second tune, hardly less moving,

in dulcet group of horns amid shimmering strings and harp, with a light bucolic answer in playful reed.

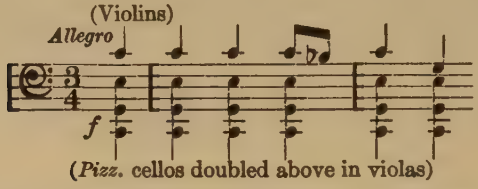


And it has a glowing climax, too, with fiery trumpet, and dashing strings and clashing wood.

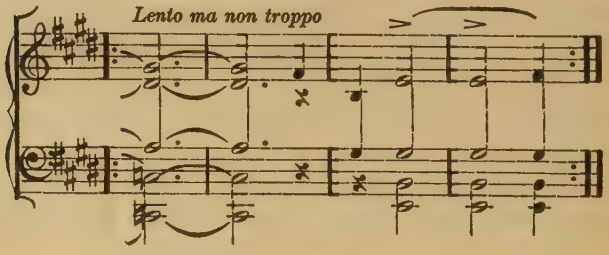
Gorgeous in the warm depth of horns sound now the returning tones of the first noble melody, with playful trill of the wood, in antiphonal song of trumpets and strings. And there are revels of new turns of the tune (where the stirring harmony seems the best of all) that will rise to a frenzy of tintinnabulation. A quicker countertheme lends life and motion to all this play and plot.

A big, solemn stride of the middle strain (of main melody) precedes the last returning verse, with all the tender pathos of the beginning.

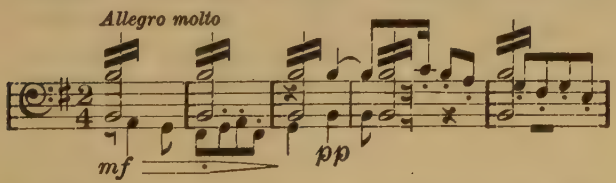
The Scherzo is wild race-feeling let loose—national music that has not yet found a melody. Significantly the drums begin the tune, to a dancing strain of *pizzicato* strings. The tune is so elemental that the



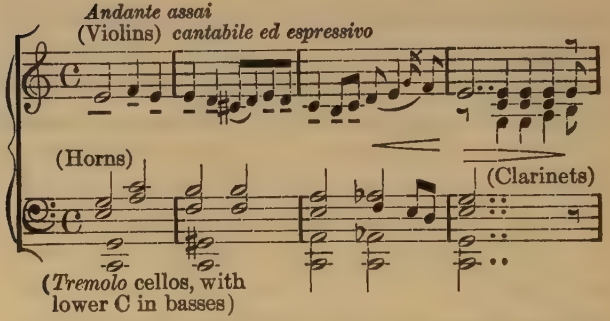
drums can really play it; the answer is equally rude, —an arpeggic motive of strings against quick runs of the higher wood. Out of it grows a tinge of tune with a fresh spring of dance,—whence returns the first savage motive. This is suddenly changed to the guise of a fugal theme, with new close, that starts a maze of disputation.

Right from the full fire of the rough dance, sad-stressed chords plunge into a moving plaint with much sweetness of melody and higher counter-melody. Then returns again the original wild rhythm.

In the last movement the composer confesses the "Fantasy" in the title. It begins with a broad sweep of the returning rhapsody, the prologue of the symphony, though without the former conclusion. Now it sings in a strong unison of the strings *largamente ed appassionato,* and with clang of chord in lower brass. The appealing middle phrase is all disguised in strum as of dance. The various strains sing freely in thirds, with sharp punctuating chords. Throughout is a balance of the pungent vigor of harmonies with dulcet melody.

In sudden rapid pace the strumming figure dances in the lower reed, then yields to the play (in the strings) of a lively (almost comic) tune of a strong national tinge,—a kind that seems native to northern countries and is not unlike a strain that crept into



American song. A tempest of pranks is suddenly halted before the entrance of a broad melody, with underlying harmonies of latent passion. The feeling of fantasy is in the further flow, with free singing chords of harp. But ever between the lines creeps in the strumming phrase, from the first prelude, returned to its earlier mood.



With baffling mystery anon come other appealing phrases from the beginning, that show the whole to be the woof almost of a single figure, or at least to lie within the poetic scope of the prologue. A fugal revel of the comic phrase with the quick strum as counter-theme ends in a new carnival,—here a dashing march, there a mad chase of strident harmonies. Now sings the full romance and passion of the melody through the whole gamut from pathos to rapture. It ends with poignant stress of the essence of the song, with sheerest grating of straining harmonies. In the midst, too, is again the mystic symbol from the heart of the prelude. Then with a springing recoil comes a last jubilation, though still in the prevailing minor, with a final coursing of the quick theme.

The whole is a broad alternation of moods, of wild abandon and of tender feeling,—the natural dual quality of primal music. So, at least in the Finale, this is a Finnish fantasy, on the very lines of other national rhapsody.

CHAPTER XIII

BOHEMIAN SYMPHONIES

IN the music of modern Bohemia is one of the most vital utterances of the folk-spirit. The critic may not force a correspondence of politics and art to support his theory. Yet a cause may here be found as in Russia and Finland. (Poland and Hungary had their earlier song). There is a sincerity, an unpremeditated quality in Bohemian music that is not found among its western neighbors. The spirit is its own best proof, without a conscious stress of a national note. Indeed, Bohemian music is striking, not at all in a separate tonal character, like Hungarian, but rather in a subtle emotional intensity, which again differs from the wild abandon of the Magyars. An expression it must be of a national feeling that has for ages been struggling against absorption. Since ancient times Bohemia has been part of a Teutonic empire. The story of its purely native kings is not much more than legendary. Nor has it shared the harder fate of other small nations; for the Teuton rule at least respected its separate unity.

But the long association with the German people has nearly worn away the racial signs and hall-marks of its folk-song. A Bohemian tune thus has a taste much like the native German. Yet a quality of its

own lies in the emotional vitality, shown in a school of national drama and, of late, in symphony. It is not necessary to seek in this modern culmination a correspondence with an impending danger of political suppression. Art does not follow history with so instant a reflection.

The intensity of this national feeling appears when Smetana himself, the minstrel of the people, is charged at home with yielding to the foreign influence. Here again is the hardship of the true national poet who feels that for the best utterance of his message he needs the grounding upon a broader art; here is the narrow Chauvinism that has confined the music of many lands within the primitive forms.

Two types we have in Bohemian music of later times: one, Smetana, of pure national celebration; a second, Dvôrák, who with a profound absorption of the German masters, never escaped the thrall of the folk-element and theme.

SMETANA. SYMPHONIC POEM, "THE MOLDAU RIVER" *

Simplicity is uppermost in these scores; yet the true essence is almost hidden to the mere reader. With all primitive quality they are more difficult than many a classic symphony. The latent charm of

* Friedrich Smetana, 1824–1884, foremost among Bohemian dramatic composers, wrote a cycle of symphonic poems under the general title "My Country." Of these the present work is the second.

folk humor and sentiment depends more on tradition and sympathy than on notation.

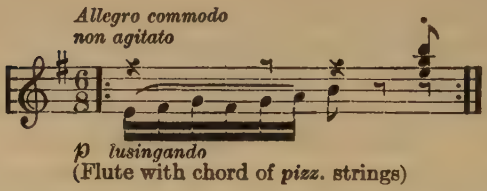
The naively graphic impulse that we find throughout the choral works of Bendl that merely starts a chance thematic line, as seen of the first branch of the Moldau, does not destroy the emotional expression. And while the feeling is sustained, the art is there, not to stifle but to utter and set free the native spring of song.

It must be yielded that the design is not profound; it smacks of the village fair rather than of grand tragedy. Song is ever supreme, and with all abundance of contrapuntal art does not become sophisticated. The charm is not of complexity, but of a more child-like, sensuous kind.

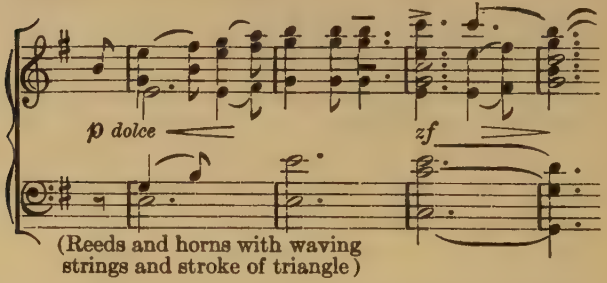
It must all be approached in a different way from other symphonic music. The musician is not even the peasant in court costume, as Dvořák once was called. He is the peasant in his own village dress, resplendent with color and proud of his rank.

We cannot enjoy the music with furrowed brow. It is a case where music touches Mother Earth and rejuvenates herself. Like fairy lore and proverbs, its virtue lies in some other element than profound design. For any form of song or verse that enshrines the spirit of a people and is tried in the forge of ages of tradition, lives on more surely than the fairest art of individual poet.

The stream is the great figure, rising from small sources in playful flutes, with light spray of harp and



strings. The first brook is joined by another (in clarinets) from a new direction. Soon grows the number and the rustle of confluent waters. The motion of the strings is wavelike, of a broader flow, though underneath we scan the several lesser currents. Above floats now the simple, happy song, that expands



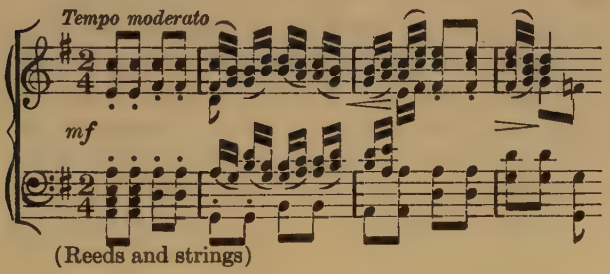
with the stream and at last reaches a glad, sunny major.

Still to the sound of flowing waters comes the forest hunt, with all the sport of trumpets and other brass.

It is descriptive music, tonal painting if you will; but the color is local or national. The strokes are not so much of events or scenes as of a popular humor and character, which we must feel with small stress

of each event. The blowing of trumpets, the purling of streams, the swaying of trees, in primal figures, all breathe the spirit of Bohemia.

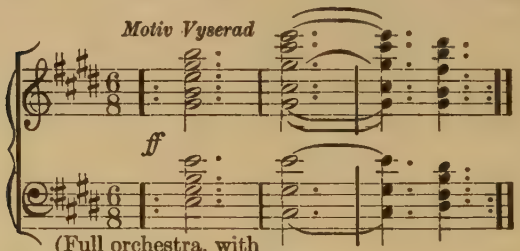
The hunt dies away; emerging from the forest the jolly sounds greet us of a peasant wedding. The



parade reaches the church in high festivity and slowly vanishes to tinkling bells.

Night has fallen; in shifted scene the stream is sparkling in the moonlight still to the quiet sweet harmonies. But this is all background for a dance of nymphs, while a dulcet, sustained song sounds through the night. At last, to the golden horns a faintest harmony is added of deeper brass. Still very softly, the brass strike a quicker phrase and we seem to hear the hushed chorus of hunt with the call of trumpets, as the other brass lead in a new verse that grows lustier with the livelier song and dance, till—with a flash we are alone with the running stream with which the dance of nymphs has somehow merged.

On it goes, in happy, ever more masterful course, a symbol of the nation's career, surging in bright major and for a moment quieting before the mighty Rapids of St. Johann. Here the song of the stream is nearly lost in the rush of eddies and the strife of big currents, with the high leaps of dashing spray,—ever recurring like unceasing battle with a towering clash at the height of the tempest. At last all meet in overpowering united torrent, suddenly to hush before the stream, at the broadest, rushes majestically along in hymnal song of exalted harmonies and triumphant melody, with joyous after-strains.

As the pilgrim to his Mecca, so the waters are wafted into the climactic motive of the Hradschin, the chant of the holy citadel. The rest is a long jubila-

tion on quicker beats of the chant, amid the plash of waters and the shaking of martial brass. Strangely, as the other sounds die away, the melody of the stream emerges clear and strong, then vanishes in the distance before the jubilant Amen.

In the general view we must feel a wonderful con-

trast here with the sophomoric state of the contemporary art in other lands where the folk-song has lost its savor,—where the natural soil is exhausted and elegant castles are built in the air of empty fantasy, or on the sands of a vain national pride.

DVÔRÁK. SYMPHONY, "FROM THE NEW WORLD." *

It is a much-discussed question how far Dvôrák's American symphony is based on characteristic folk-song. Here are included other questions: to what extent the themes are based on an African type, and whether negro music is fairly American folk-song. Many, perhaps most people, will answer with a general negative. But it seems to be true that many of us do not really know the true negro song,—have quite a wrong idea of it.

To be sure, all argument aside, it is a mistake to think that folk-song gets its virtue purely from a distinctive national quality,—because it is Hungarian, Scandinavian, or Slavonic. If all the national modes and rhythms of the world were merged in one republic, there would still be a folk-song of the true type and value. There is a subtle charm and strength in the spontaneous simplicity, all aside from racial color. It is here that, like Antæus, the musician touches Mother Earth and renews his strength. So, when Dvôrák suddenly shifts in the midst of his New World fantasy into a touch of Bohemian song, there is no real loss. It is all relevant in the broad

* Anton Dvôrák, 1841–1904.

sense of folk feeling, that does not look too closely at geographical bounds. It is here that music, of all arts, leads to a true state of equal sympathy, regardless of national prejudice. What, therefore, distinguishes Dvôrák's symphony may not be mere negro melody, or even American song, but a genuine folk-feeling, in the widest meaning.

In one way, Dvôrák's work reminds us of Mendelssohn's Scotch Symphony: both exploit foreign national melody in great poetic forms. One could write a Scotch symphony in two ways: one, in Mendelssohn's, the other would be to tell of the outer impression in the terms of your own folk-song. That is clearly the way Mendelssohn wrote most of the Italian Symphony,—which stands on a higher plane than the Scotch. For folk-song is the natural language of its own people. It is interesting to see the exact type that each theme represents; but it is not so important as to catch the distinction, the virtue of folk-song *per se* and the purely natural utterance of one's own. Of course, every one writes always in his folk-tones. On the other hand, one may explore one's own special treasures of native themes, as Dvôrák himself did so splendidly in his Slavic Dances and in his Legends. So one must, after all, take this grateful, fragrant work as an idea of what American composers might do in full earnest. Dvôrák is of all later masters the most eminent folk-musician. He shows greatest sympathy, freedom and delight in revelling among the simple tones and rhythms of popular utterance, rearing on them, all in poetic

spontaneity, a structure of high art. Without strain or show, Dvôrák stood perhaps the most genuine of late composers, with a firm foot on the soil of native melody, yet with the balance and restraint and the clear vision of the trained master.*

In a certain view, it would seem that by the fate of servitude the American negro has become the element in our own national life that alone produces true folk-song,—that corresponds to the peasant and serf of Europe, the class that must find in song the refuge and solace for its loss of material joys. So Dvôrák perhaps is right, with a far seeing eye, when he singles the song of the despised race as the national type.

Another consideration fits here. It has been suggested that the imitative sense of the negro has led him to absorb elements of other song. It is very difficult to separate original African elements of song from those that may thus have been borrowed. At any rate, there is no disparagement of the negro's musical genius in this theory. On the contrary, it would be almost impossible to imagine a musical people that would resist the softer tones of surround-

* The whole subject of American and negro folk-song is new and unexplored. There are races of the blacks living on the outer reefs and islands of the Carolinas, with not more than thirty whites in a population of six thousand, where "spirituals" and other musical rites are held which none but negroes may attend. The truest African mode and rhythm would seem to be preserved here; to tell the truth, there is great danger of their loss unless they are soon recorded.

ing and intermingling races. We know, to be sure, that Stephen Foster, the author of "The Old Folks at Home," "Massa's in the Cold, Cold Ground," and other famous ballads, was a Northerner, though his mother came from the South. We hear, too, that he studied negro music eagerly. It is not at all inconceivable, however, Foster's song may have been devoid of negro elements, that the colored race absorbed, wittingly or unwittingly, something of the vein into their plaints or lullabies,—that, indeed, Foster's songs may have been a true type that stirred their own imitation. From all points of view,—the condition of slavery, the trait of assimilation and the strong gift of musical expression may have conspired to give the negro a position and equipment which would entitle his tunes to stand as the real folk-song of America.

The eccentric accent seems to have struck the composer strongly. And here is a strange similarity with Hungarian song,—though there is, of course, no kinship of race whatever between Bohemians and Magyars. One might be persuaded to find here simply an ebullition of rhythmic impulse,—the desire for a special fillip that starts and suggests a stronger energy of motion than the usual conventional pace. At any rate, the symphony begins with just such strong, nervous phrases that soon gather big force. Hidden is the germ of the first, undoubtedly the chief theme of the whole work.

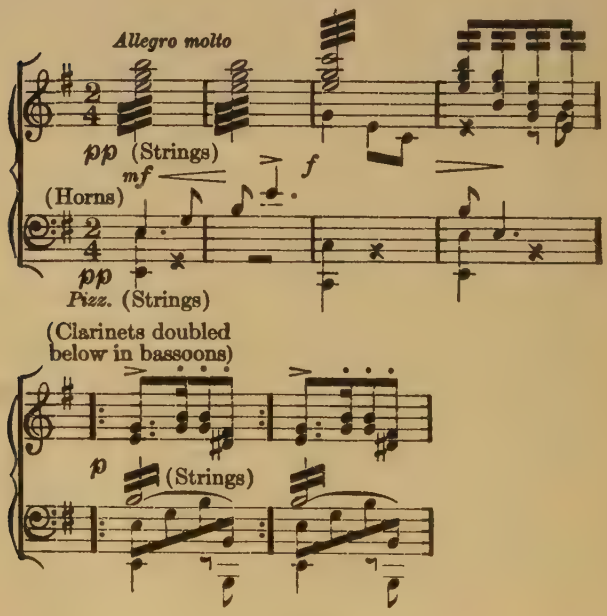
It is more and more remarkable how a search will show the true foundation of almost all of Dvôrák's

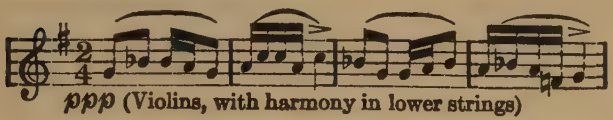
themes. Not that one of them is actually borrowed, or lacks an original, independent reason for being.

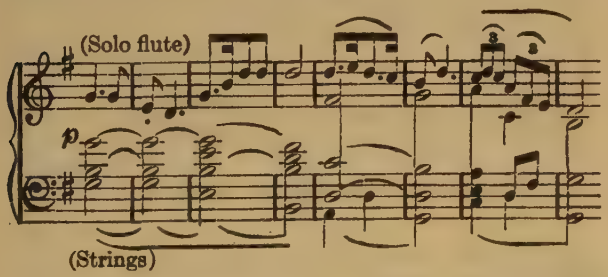
Whether by imitation or not, the pentatonic scale of the Scotch is an intimate part of negro song. This avoidance of the seventh or leading tone is seen throughout the symphony as well as in the traditional jubilee tunes. It may be that this trait was merely confirmed in the African by foreign musical influence. For it seems that the leading-note, the urgent need for the ascending half-tone in closing, belongs originally to the minstrelsy of the Teuton and of central Europe, that resisted and conquered the sterner modes of the early Church. Ruder nations here agreed with Catholic ritual in preferring the larger interval of the whole tone. But in the quaint jump of the third the Church had no part, clinging closely to a diatonic process.

The five-toned scale is indeed so widespread that it cannot be fastened on any one race or even family of nations. The Scotch have it; it is characteristic of the Chinese and of the American Indian. But, independently of the basic mode or scale, negro songs show here and there a strange feeling for a savage kind of lowering of this last note. The pentatonic scale simply omits it, as well as the fourth step. But the African will now and then rudely and forcibly lower it by a half-tone. In the minor it is more natural; for it can then be thought of as the fifth of the relative major. Moreover, it is familiar to us in the Church chant. This effect we have in the beginning of the Scherzo. Many of us do not know

the true African manner, here. But in the major it is much more barbarous. And it is almost a pity that Dvôrák did not strike it beyond an occasional touch (as in the second quoted melody). A fine example is "Roll, Jordan Roll," in E flat (that opens, by the way, much like Dvôrák's first theme), where the beginning of the second line rings out on a savage D flat, out of all key to Caucasian ears.

We soon see stealing out of the beginning *Adagio* an eccentric pace in motion of the bass, that leads to the burst of main subject, *Allegro molto,* with a cer-

tain ragged rhythm that we Americans cannot disclaim as a nation. The working up is spirited, and presently out of the answer grows a charming jingle that somehow strikes home.

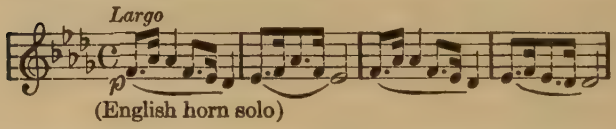


It begins in the minor and has a strange, barbaric touch of cadence. Many would acknowledge it at most as a touch of Indian mode. Yet it is another phase of the lowered seventh. And if we care to search, we find quite a prototype in a song like "Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel." Soon the phrase has a more familiar ring as it turns into a friendly major. But the real second theme comes in a solo tune on the flute, in the major,

with a gait something like the first.* Less and less we can resist the genuine negro quality of these melo-

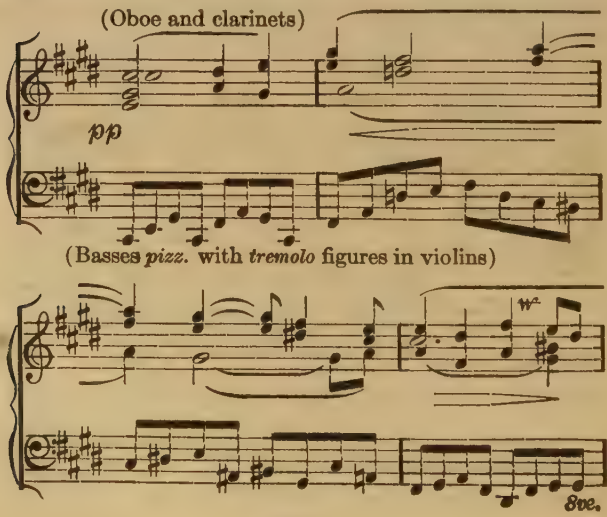
* Again it is interesting to compare here the jubilee song, "Oh! Redeemed," in the collection of "Jubilee and Plantation Songs," of the Oliver Ditson Company.

dies, and, at the same time, their beauty and the value of the tonal treasure-house in our midst.

The whole of the first Allegro is thus woven of three melodious and characteristic themes in very clear sonata-form. The second, Largo, movement is a lyric of moving pathos, with a central melody that may not have striking traits of strict African song, and yet belongs to the type closely associated with the negro vein of plaint or love-song. The rhythmic

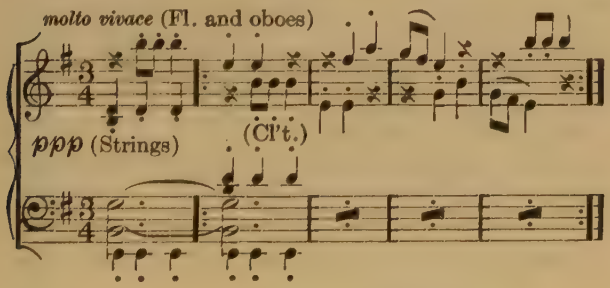


turns that lead to periods of excitement and climaxes of rapid motion, are absent in the main melody. But



they appear in the episode that intervenes. Even here, in the midst, is a new contrast of a minor lament that has a strong racial trait in the sudden swing to major and, as quickly, back to the drearier mode. This is followed by a rhapsody or succession of rapid, primitive phrases, that leads to a crisis where, of a sudden, three themes sing at once, the two of the previous Allegro and the main melody of the Largo, in distorted pace with full chorus. This excitement is as suddenly lulled and soothed by the return of the original moving song.

The Scherzo starts in a quick three-beat strum on the chord we have pointed to as a true model trait of negro music, with the lowered leading-note. The



theme, discussed in close stress of imitation, seems merely to mark the rapid swing in the drone of strange harmony. But what is really a sort of Trio (*poco sostenuto*) is another sudden, grateful change to major, perfectly true to life, so to speak, in this turn of mode and in the simple lines of the tune. The lyric mood all but suppresses the dance, the

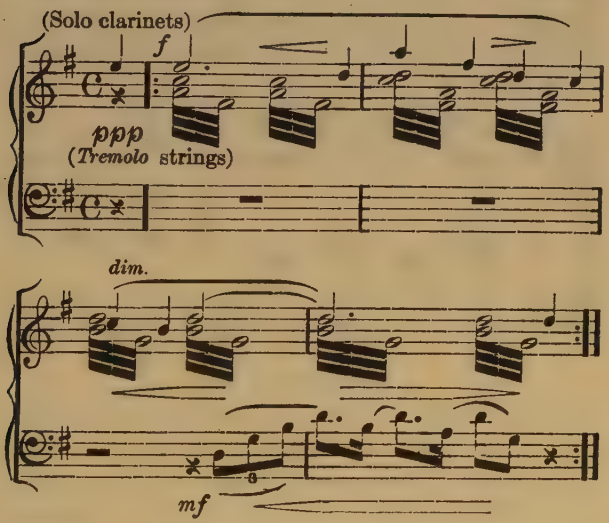
melody sounding like a new verse of the Largo. The trip has always lingered, but not too much for the delicious change when it returns to carry us off our feet.

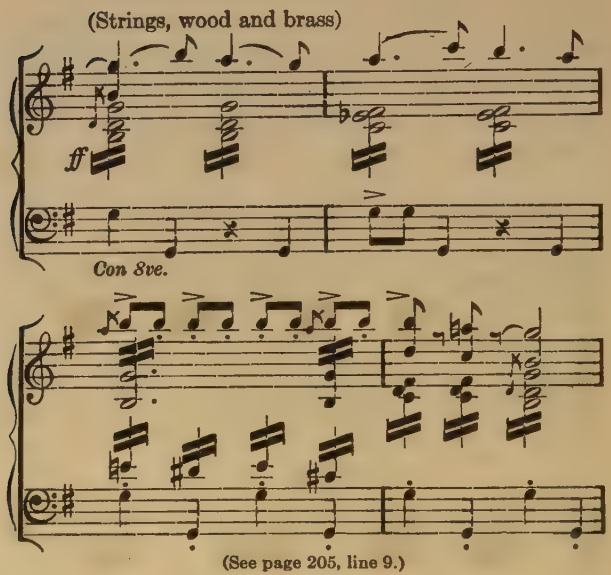
The Scherzo now steals in again, quite a piece, it seems, with the Trio. As the rising volume nears a crisis, the earliest theme (from the first Allegro) is heard in the basses. In the hushed discourse of Scherzo theme that follows, the old melody still intrudes. In mockery of one of its turns comes an enchanting bit of tune, as naïve an utterance as any, much like a children's dancing song. And it returns later with still new enchantment of rhythm. But the whole is too full of folk-melody to trace out, yet is, in its very fibre, true to the idea of an epic of the people.

Presently the whole Scherzo and Trio are rehearsed; but now instead of the phase of latest melodies is a close where the oldest theme (of Allegro) is sung in lusty blasts of the horns and wood, with answers of the Scherzo motive.

In the last movement, *Allegro con fuoco,* appears early a new kind of march tune that, without special

trick of rhythm, has the harsh note of lowered leading-note (in the minor, to be sure) in very true

keeping with negro song. The march is carried on, with flowing answer, to a high pitch of varied splendor and tonal power. The second theme is utterly opposed in a certain pathetic rhapsody. Yet it rises, at the close, to a fervent burst in rapid motion. We

may expect in the Finale an orgy of folk-tune and dance, and we are not disappointed. There is, too, a quick rise and fall of mood, that is a mark of the negro as well as of the Hungarian. By a sudden doubling, we are in the midst of a true "hoe-down," in jolliest jingle, with that naïve iteration, true to life; it comes out clearest when the tune of the bass (that sounds like a rapid "Three Blind Mice") is



(See page 205, line 9.)

put in the treble. A pure idealized negro dance-frolic is here. It is hard to follow all the pranks; lightly as the latest phrase descends in extending melody, a rude blast of the march intrudes in discordant humor. A new jingle of dance comes with a redoubled pace of bits of the march. As this dies down to dimmest bass, the old song from the Largo rings high in the wood. Strangest of all, in a fierce shout of the whole chorus sounds twice this same pathetic strain. Later comes a redoubled speed of the march in the woodwind, above a slower in low strings. Now the original theme of all has a noisy say. Presently the sad second melody has a full verse. Once more

the Largo lullaby sings its strain in the minor. In the close the original Allegro theme has a literal, vigorous dispute with the march-phrase for the last word of all.

The work does less to exploit American music than to show a certain community in all true folk-song. Nor is this to deny a strain peculiar to the new world. It seems a poet of distant land at the same time and in the same tones uttered his longing for his own country and expressed the pathos and the romance of the new. Dvôrák, like all true workers, did more than he thought: he taught Americans not so much the power of a song of their own, as their right of heritage in all folk-music. And this is based not merely on an actual physical inheritance from the various older races.

If the matter, in Dvôrák's symphony, is of American negro-song, the manner is Bohemian. A stranger-poet may light more clearly upon the traits of a foreign lore. But his celebration will be more conscious if he endeavor to cling throughout to the special dialect. A true national expression will come from the particular soil and will be unconscious of its own idiom.

The permanent hold that Dvôrák's symphony has gained is due to an intrinsic merit of art and sincere sentiment; it has little to do with the nominal title or purpose.

CHAPTER XIV

THE EARLIER BRUCKNER*

WHATEVER be the final answer of the mooted question of the greatness of Bruckner's symphonies, there is no doubt that he had his full share of technical profundity, and a striking mastery of the melodious weaving of a maze of concordant strains. The question inevitably arises with Bruckner as to the value of the world's judgments on its contemporary poets. There can be no doubt that the *furore* of the musical public tends to settle on one or two favorites with a concentration of praise that ignores the work of others, though it be of a finer grain. Thus Schubert's greatest—his one completed—symphony was never acclaimed until ten years after his death. Even his songs somehow brought more glory to the singer than to the composer. Bach's oratorios lay buried for a full century. On the other hand, names great in their day are utterly lost from the horizon. It is hard to conceive the *éclat* of a Buononcini or a Monteverde,—whose works were once preëminent. There are elements in art, of special, sensational effect, that make a peculiar appeal in their time, and are incompatible with true and permanent great-

* Anton Bruckner, born at Annsfelden, Austria, 1828; died in Vienna in 1896.

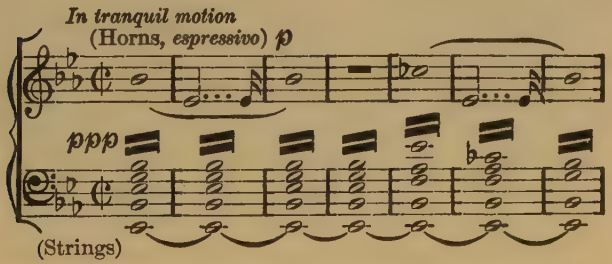
ness. One is tempted to say, the more sudden and vehement the success, the less it will endure. But it would not be true. Such an axiom would condemn an opera like "Don Giovanni," an oratorio like the "Creation," a symphony like Beethoven's Seventh. There is a wonderful difference, an immeasurable gulf between the good and the bad in art; yet the apparent line is of the subtlest. Most street songs may be poor; but some are undoubtedly beautiful in a very high sense. It is a problem of mystic fascination, this question of the value of contemporary art. It makes its appeal to the subjective view of each listener. No rule applies. Every one will perceive in proportion to his capacity, no one beyond it. So, a profound work may easily fail of response, as many works in the various arts have done in the past, because the average calibre of the audience is too shallow, while it may deeply stir an intelligent few. Not the least strange part of it all is the fact that there can, of necessity, be no decision in the lifetime of the poet. Whether it is possible for obscure Miltons never to find their meed of acclaim, is a question that we should all prefer to answer in the negative. There is a certain shudder in thinking of such a chance; it seems a little akin to the danger of being buried alive.

The question of Bruckner's place can hardly be said to be settled, although he has left nine symphonies. He certainly shows a freedom, ease and mastery in the symphonic manner, a limpid flow of melody

and a sure control in the interweaving of his themes, so that, in the final verdict, the stress may come mainly on the value of the subjects, in themselves. He is fond of dual themes, where the point lies in neither of two motives, but in the interplay of both; we see it somewhat extended in Richard Strauss, who uses it, however, in a very different spirit. The one evident and perhaps fatal lack is of intrinsic beauty of the melodic ideas, and further, an absence of the strain of pathos that sings from the heart of a true symphony. While we are mainly impressed by the workmanship, there is no denying a special charm of constant tuneful flow. . At times this complexity is almost marvellous in the clear simplicity of the concerted whole,—in one view, the main trait or trick of symphonic writing. It is easy to pick out the leading themes as they appear in official order. But it is not so clear which of them constitute the true text. The multiplicity of tunes and motives is amazing.

Of the Wagner influence with which Bruckner is said to be charged, little is perceptible in his second symphony. On the contrary, a strong academic tradition pervades. The themes are peculiarly symphonic. Moreover they show so strikingly the dual quality that one might say, as a man may see double, Bruckner sang double. Processes of augmenting and inverting abound, together with the themal song in the bass. Yet there is not the sense of overloaded learning. There is everywhere a clear and melodious polyphony.

But with all masterly architecture, even enchanting changes of harmony and a prodigal play of melody, the vacuity of poetic ideas must preclude a permanent appeal. Bruckner is here the schoolmaster: his symphony is a splendid skeleton, an object lesson for the future poet.

In the FOURTH (ROMANTIC) SYMPHONY the main light plays throughout on the wind. The text is a call of horns, that begins the work. It is a symphony

of wood-notes, where the forest-horn is sovereign,—awakening a widening world of echoes, with a murmuring maze of lesser notes. One has again the feeling that in the quiet interweaving of a tapestry of strains lies the individual quality of the composer, —that the *forte* blasts, the stride of big unison figures are but the interlude.

In the Andante the charm is less of tune than of the delicate changing shades of the harmony and of the colors of tone. We are ever surprised in the gentlest way by a turn of chord or by the mere entrance of a horn among the whispering strings. The

shock of a soft modulation may be as sudden as of the loud, sudden blare. But we cannot somehow be consoled for the want of a heart-felt melody.

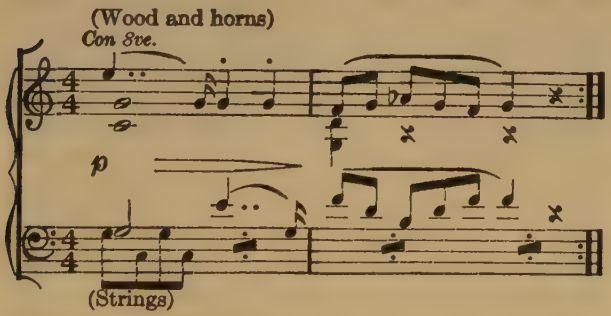
The Scherzo is a kind of hunting-piece, full of the sparkle, the color and romance of bugles and horns, —a spirited fanfare broken by hushed phrases of strings or wood, or an elf-like mystic dance on the softened call of trumpets. The Trio sings apart, between the gay revels, in soft voices and slower pace, like a simple ballad.

The Finale is conceived in mystical retrospect, beginning in vein of prologue: over mysterious murmuring strings, long sustained notes of the reed and horn in octave descent are mingled with a soft carillon of horns and trumpets in the call of the Scherzo. In broad swing a free fantasy rises to a loud refrain (in the brass) of the first motive of the symphony.

In slower pace and hush of sound sings a madrigal of tender phrases. A pair of melodies recall like figures of the first Allegro. Indeed, a chain of dulcet strains seems to rise from the past.

The fine themal relevance may be pursued in infinite degree, to no end but sheer bewilderment. The truth is that a modern vanity for subtle connection, a purest pedantry, is here evident, and has become a baneful tradition in the modern symphony. It is an utter confusion of the letter with the spirit. Once for all, a themal coherence of symphony must lie in the main lines, not in a maze of unsignificant figures.

Marked is a sharp alternation of mood, tempestuous and tender, of Florestan and Eusebius. The lyric phase yields to the former heroic fantasy and then returns in soothing solace into a prevailing motive that harks back to the second of the beginning movement. The fantasy, vague of melody, comes



(in more than one sense) as relief from the small tracery. It is just to remember a like oscillation in the first Allegro.

When the prologue recurs, the phrases are in ascent, instead of descent of octaves. A climactic verse of the main dulcet melody breaks out in resonant choir of brass and is followed by a soft rhapsody on the several strains that hark back to the beginning. From the halting pace the lyric episode rises in flight of continuous song to enchanting lilt. Now in the big heroic fantasy sing the first slow phrases as to the manner born and as naturally break into a pæan of the full motive, mingled with strains of the

original legend of the symphony, that flows on to broad hymnal cadence.

In mystic musing we reach a solemn stillness where the prologue phrase is slowly drawn out into a profoundly moving hymn. Here we must feel is Meister Bruckner's true poetic abode rather than in the passion and ecstasy of romance into which he was vainly lured.*

* Bruckner's Fifth Symphony (in B flat) is a typical example of closest correlation of themes that are devoid of intrinsic melody.

An introduction supplies in the bass of a hymnal line the main theme of the Allegro by inversion as well as the germ of the first subject of the Adagio. Throughout, as in the Romantic Symphony, the relation between the first and the last movement is subtle. A closing, jagged phrase reappears as the first theme of the Finale.

The Adagio and Scherzo are built upon the same figure of bass. The theme of the Trio is acclaimed by a German annotator as the reverse of the first motive of the symphony.

In the prelude of the Finale, much as in the Ninth of Beethoven, are passed in review the main themes of the earlier movements. Each one is answered by an eccentric phrase that had its origin in the first movement and is now extended to a fugal theme.

The climactic figure is a new hymnal line that moves as central theme of an imposing double fugue.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LATER BRUCKNER

IN Bruckner's later works appears the unique instance of a discipline grounded in the best traditions, united to a deft use of ephemeral devices. The basic cause of modern mannerism, mainly in harmonic effects, lies in a want of formal mastery; an impatience of thorough technic; a craving for quick sensation. With Bruckner it was the opposite weakness of original ideas, an organic lack of poetic individuality. It is this the one charge that cannot be brought home to the earlier German group of reaction against the classic idea.

There is melody, almost abundant, in Wagner and Liszt and their German contemporaries. Indeed it was an age of lyricists. The fault was that they failed to recognize their lyric limitation, lengthening and padding their motives abnormally to fit a form that was too large. Hence the symphony of Liszt, with barren stretches, and the impossible plan of the later music-drama. The truest form of such a period was the song, as it blossomed in the works of a Franz.

Nor has this grandiose tendency even yet spent its course. A saving element was the fashioning of a new form, by Liszt himself,—the Symphonic Poem,

—far inferior to the symphony, but more adequate to the special poetic intent.

Whatever be the truth of personal gossip, there is no doubt that Bruckner lent himself and his art to a championing of the reactionary cause in the form that was intrinsically at odds with its spirit. Hence in later works of Bruckner these strange episodes of borrowed romance, abruptly stopped by a firm counterpoint of excellent quality,—indeed far the best of his writing. For, if a man have little ideas, at least his good workmanship will count for something.

In truth, one of the strangest types is presented in Bruckner,—a pedant who by persistent ingenuity simulates a master-work almost to perfection. By so much as genius is not an infinite capacity for pains, by so much is Bruckner's Ninth not a true symphony. Sometimes, under the glamor of his art, we are half persuaded that mere persistence may transmute pedantry into poetry.

It seems almost as if the Wagnerians chose their champion in the symphony with a kind of suppressed contempt for learning, associating mere intellectuality with true mastery, pointing to an example of greatest skill and least inspiration as if to say: "Here is your symphonist if you must have one." And it is difficult to avoid a suspicion that his very partisans were laughing up their sleeve at their adopted champion.

We might say all these things, and perhaps we have gone too far in suggesting them. After all we have

no business with aught but the music of Bruckner, whatever may have been his musical politics, his vanity, his ill judgment, or even his deliberate partisanship against his betters. But the ideas themselves are unsubstantial; on shadowy foundation they give an illusion by modern touches of harmony and rhythm that are not novel in themselves. The melodic idea is usually divided in two, as by a clever juggler. There is really no one thought, but a plenty of small ones to hide the greater absence.

We have merely to compare this artificial manner with the poetic reaches of Brahms to understand the insolence of extreme Wagnerians and the indignation of a Hanslick. As against the pedantry of Bruckner the style of Strauss is almost welcome in its frank pursuit of effects which are at least grateful in themselves. Strauss makes hardly a pretence at having melodic ideas. They serve but as pawns or puppets for his harmonic and orchestral *mise-en-scène.* He is like a play-wright constructing his plot around a scenic design.

Just a little common sense is needed,—an unpremeditated attitude. Thus the familiar grouping, "*Bach, Beethoven* and *Brahms,*" is at least not unnatural. Think of the absurdity of "*Bach, Beethoven* and *Bruckner*"! *

The truth is, the Bruckner cult is a striking symptom of a certain decadence in German music; an

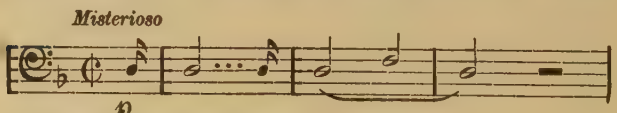
* A festival was held in Munich in the summer of 1911, in celebration of "Bach, Beethoven and Bruckner."

incapacity to tell the sincere quality of feeling in the dense, brilliant growth of technical virtuosity. In the worship at the Bayreuth shrine, somehow reinforced by a modern national self-importance, has been lost a heed for all but a certain vein of exotic romanticism, long ago run to riotous seed, a blending of hedonism and fatalism. No other poetic message gets a hearing and the former may be rung in endless repetition and reminiscence, provided, to be sure, it be framed with brilliant cunning of workmanship.

Here we feel driven defiantly to enounce the truth: that the highest art, even in a narrow sense, comes only with a true poetic message. Of this Bruckner is a proof; for, if any man by pure knowledge could make a symphony, it was he. But, with almost superhuman skill, there is something wanting in the inner connection, where the main ideas are weak, forced or borrowed. It is only the true poetic rapture that ensures the continuous absorption that drives in perfect sequence to irresistible conclusion.

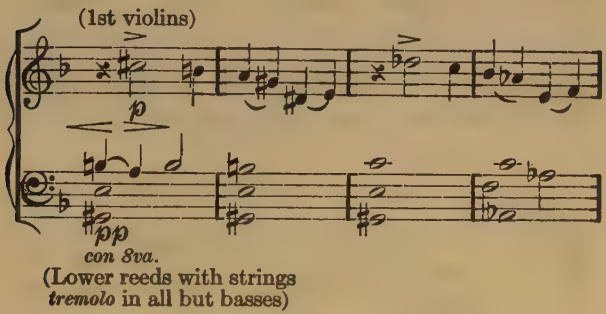
SYMPHONY NO. 9

I.—Solenne. Solemn mystery is the mood, amid trembling strings on hollow unison, before the eight



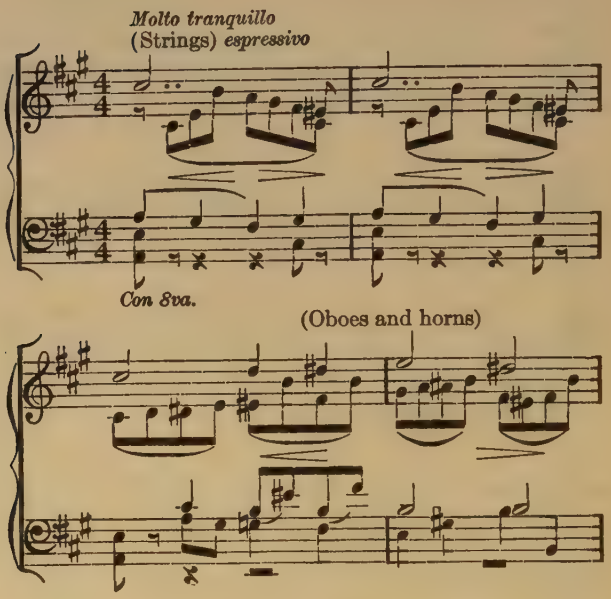
(Eight horns with *tremolo* strings on D in three octaves)

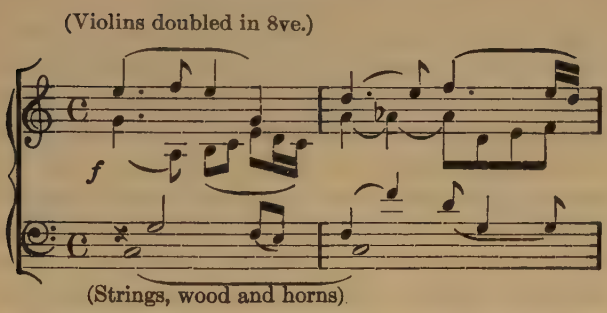
horns strike a phrase in the minor chord that in higher echoes breaks into a strange harmony and descends into a turn of melodic cadence. In answer is another chain of brief phrases, each beginning



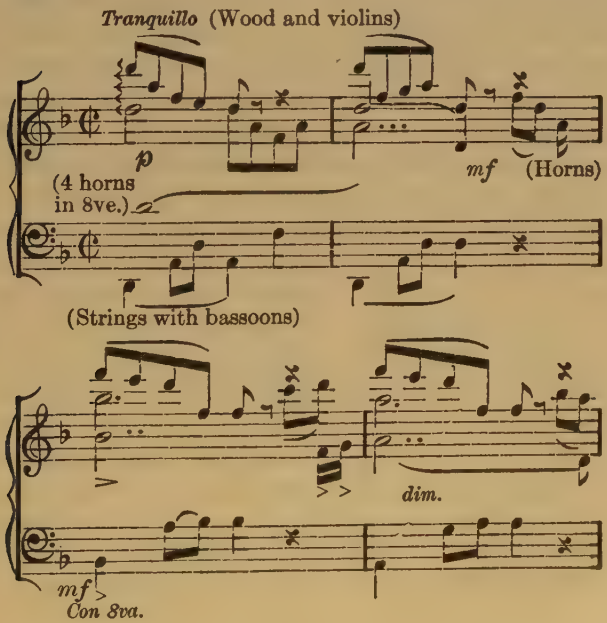
with a note above the chord (the common mark and manner of the later school of harmonists *) and a new ascent on a literal ladder of subtlest progress, while hollow intervals are intermingled in the pinch of close harmonies. The bewildering maze here begins of multitudinous design, enriched with modern devices.

A clash of all the instruments acclaims the climax before the unison stroke of fullest chorus on the solemn note of the beginning. A favorite device of Bruckner, a measured tread of *pizzicato* strings with interspersed themal motives, precedes the romantic episode. Throughout the movement is this alternation of liturgic chorale with tender melody.

* See Vol. II, note, page 104.

Bruckner's pristine polyphonic manner ever appears in the double strain of melodies, where each complements, though not completes the other. However multiple the plan, we cannot feel more than the quality of *unusual* in the motives themselves, of some interval of ascent or descent. Yet as the melody grows to larger utterance, the fulness of polyphonic art brings a beauty of tender sentiment, rising to a moving climax, where the horns lead the song in the heart of the madrigal chorus, and the strings alone sing the expressive answer.



A third phrase now appears, where lies the main poetry of the movement. Gentle swaying calls of



soft horns and wood, echoed and answered in close pursuit, lead to a mood of placid, elemental rhythm, with something of "Rheingold," of "Ossian" ballad, of the lapping waves of Cherubini's "Anacreon." In the midst the horns blow a line of sonorous melody, where the cadence has a breath of primal legend. On the song runs, ever mid the elemental motion, to a resonant height and dies away as before. The intimate, romantic melody now returns, but it is rocked on the continuing pelagic pulse; indeed, we hear anon a faint phrase of the legend, in distant trumpet, till we reach a joint rhapsody of both moods; and in the never resting motion, mid vanishing echoes, we dream of some romance of the sea.

Against descending harmonies return the hollow, sombre phrases of the beginning, with the full cadence of chorale in the brass; and beyond, the whole prelude has a full, extended verse. In the alternation of solemn and sweet episode returns the tender melody, with pretty inversions, rising again to an ardent height. The renewed clash of acclaiming chorus ushers again the awful phrase of unison (now in octave descent), in towering majesty. But now it rises in the ever increasing vehemence where the final blast is lit up with a flash of serene sonority.

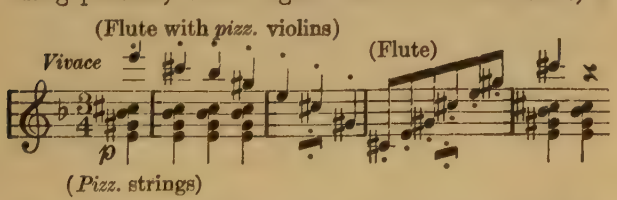
This motive, of simple octave call, indeed pervades the earlier symphony in big and little. And now, above a steady, sombre melodic tread of strings it rises in a fray of eager retorts, transfigured in wonderful harmony again and again to a brilliant height,

pausing on a ringing refrain, in sombre hue of overpowering blast.

A soft interlude of halting and diminishing strings leads to the romantic melody as it first appeared, where the multiple song again deepens and ennobles the theme. It passes straight into the waving, elemental motion, where again the hallowed horn utters its sibyl phrase, again rising to resonant height. And again merges the intimate song with the continuing pulse of the sea, while the trumpet softly sounds the legend and a still greater height of rhapsody.

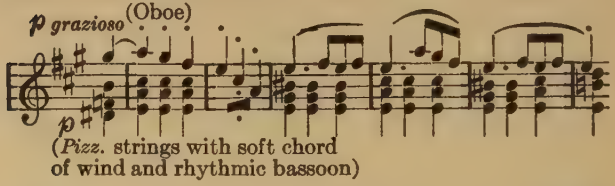
Dull brooding chords bring a sombre play of the awing phrase, over a faint rocking motion, clashing in bold harmony, while the horns surge in broader melody. The climactic clash ends in a last verse of the opening phrase, as of primal, religious chant.

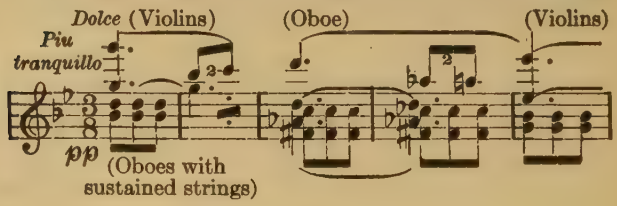
II.—Scherzo. In the dazzling pace of bright clashing harmonies, the perfect answers of falling and rising phrases, we are again before the semblance, at

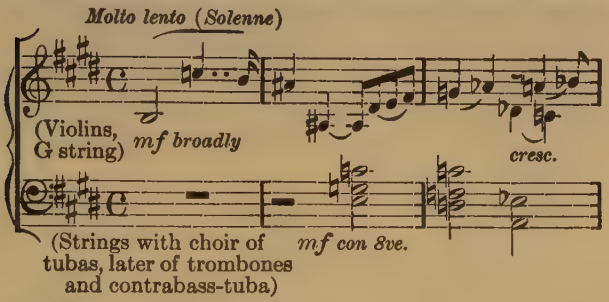


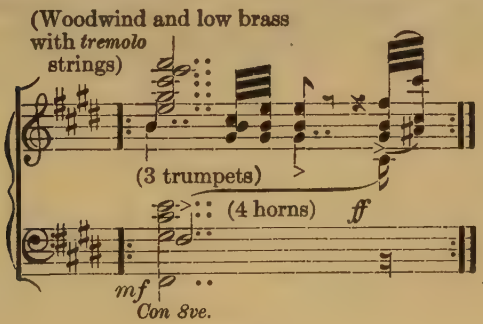
least, of a great poetic idea. To be sure there is a touch of stereotype in the chords and even in the pinch and clash of hostile motives. And there is not the distinctive melody,—final stamp and test of the

shaft of inspiration. Yet in the enchantment of motion, sound and form, it seems mean-spirited to cavil at a want of something greater. One stands bewildered before such art and stunned of all judgment.

A delight of delicate gambols follows the first brilliant dance of main motive. Amid a rougher trip of unison sounds the sonorous brass, and to softest jarring murmur of strings a pretty jingle of reed,

with later a slower counter-song, almost a madrigal of pastoral answers, till we are back in the ruder original dance. The gay cycle leads to a height of rough volume (where the mystic brass sound in the midst) and a revel of echoing chase.

In sudden hush of changed tone on fastest fairy trip, strings and wood play to magic harmonies. In calming motion the violins sing a quieter song, ever

echoed by the reed. Though there is no gripping force of themal idea, the melodies are all of grateful charm, and in the perfect round of rhythmic design we may well be content. The original dance recurs with a full fine orgy of hostile euphony.

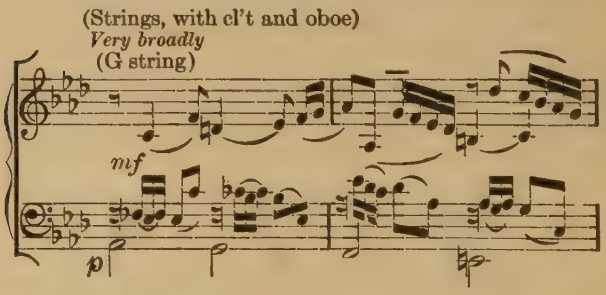
III.—Adagio. Feierlich,—awesome indeed are these first sounds, and we are struck by the original-

ity of Bruckner's technic. After all we must give the benefit at least of the doubt. And there is after this deeply impressive *introit* a gorgeous Promethean



spring of up-leaping harmonies. The whole has certainly more of concrete beauty than many of the labored attempts of the present day.

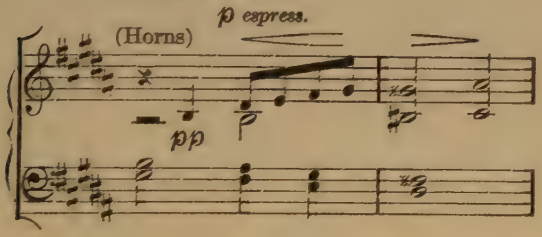
The prelude dies down with an exquisite touch of precious dissonance,—whether it came from the heart or from the workshop. The strange and tragic part is that with so much art and talent there should not be the strong individual idea,—the flash of new tonal figure that stands fearless upon its own feet. All this pretty machinery seems wasted upon the framing and presenting, at the moment of expectation, of the shadows of another poet's ideas or of mere platitudes.

In the midst of the broad sweeping theme with a

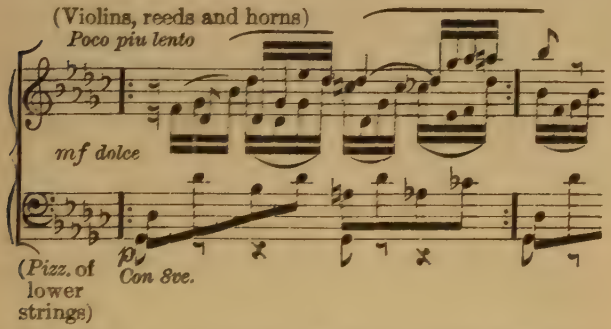


promise of deep utterance is a phrase of horns with the precise accent and agony of a *Tristan*. The very semblance of whole motives seems to be taken from the warp and woof of Wagnerian drama. And thus the whole symphony is degraded, in its gorgeous capacity, to the reëchoed rhapsody of exotic roman-

ticism. It is all little touches, no big thoughts,—a mosaic of a symphony.



And so the second theme * is almost too heavily laden with fine detail for its own strength, though



it ends with a gracefully delicate answer. The main melody soon recurs and sings with a stress of warm feeling in the cellos, echoed by glowing strains of

* We have spoken of a prelude, first and second theme; they might have been more strictly numbered first, second and third theme

the horns. Romantic harmonies bring back the solemn air of the prelude with a new counter melody, in precise opposite figure, as though inverted in a mirror, and again the dim moving chords that seem less of Bruckner than of legendary drama. In big accoutrement the double theme moves with double answers, ever with the sharp pinch of harmonies and heroic mien. Gentlest retorts of the motives sing with fairy clearness (in horns and reeds), rising to tender, expressive dialogue. With growing spirit they ascend once more to the triumphant clash of empyræan chords, that may suffice for justifying beauty.

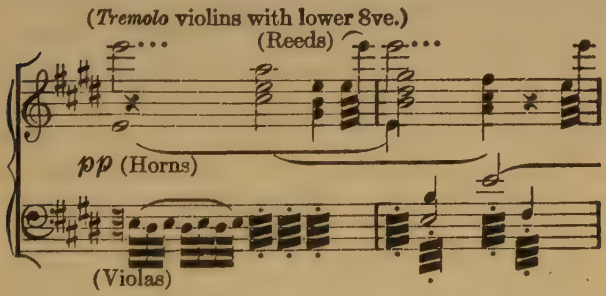
Instead of the first, the second melody follows with its delicate grace. After a pause recurs the phrase that harks from mediæval romance, now in a stirring ascent of close chasing voices. The answer, perfect in its timid halting descent, exquisite in accent and in the changing hues of its periods, is robbed of true effect by its direct reflection of Wagnerian ecstasies.

As if in recoil, a firm hymnal phrase sounds in the strings, ending in a more intimate cadence. Another chain of rarest fairy clashes, on the motive of the prelude, leads to the central verse, the song of the first main melody in the midst of soft treading strings, and again descends the fitting answer of poignant accent.

And now, for once forgetting all origin and clinging sense of reminiscence, we may revel in the rich romance, the fathoms of mystic harmony, as the main

song sings and rings from the depths of dim legend in lowest brass, amidst a soft humming chorus, in constant shift of fairy tone.

A flight of ascending chords brings the big exaltation of the first prophetic phrase, ever answered by exultant ring of trumpet, ending in sudden awing pause. An eerie train of echoes from the verse of prelude leads to a loveliest last song of the poignant answer of main song, over murmuring strings. It



is carried on by the mystic choir of sombre brass in shifting steps of enchanting harmony and dies away in tenderest lingering accents.*

* In place of the uncompleted Finale, Bruckner is said to have directed that his "*Te Deum*" be added to the other movements.

CHAPTER XVI

HUGO WOLFF *

"PENTHESILEA." SYMPHONIC POEM †

AN entirely opposite type of composer, Hugo Wolff, shows the real strength of modern German music in a lyric vein, sincere, direct and fervent. His longest work for instruments has throughout the charm of natural rhythm and melody, with subtle shading of the harmony. Though there is no want of contrapuntal design, the workmanship never obtrudes. It is a model of the right use of symbolic motives in frequent recurrence and subtle variation.

In another instrumental piece, the "Italian Serenade," all kinds of daring suspenses and gentle clashes and surprises of harmonic scene give a fragrance of dissonant euphony, where a clear melody ever rules. "Penthesilea," with a climactic passion and a sheer contrast of tempest and tenderness, uttered with all the mastery of modern devices, has a pervading thrall of pure musical beauty. We are tempted to hail in Wolff a true poet in an age of pedants and false prophets.

* Hugo Wolff, born in 1860, died in 1903.

† After the like-named tragedy of Heinrich von Kleist.

PENTHESILEA—A TRAGEDY BY HEINRICH VON KLEIST.*

As Wolff's work is admittedly modelled on Kleist's tragedy, little known to the English world, it is important to view the main lines of this poem, which has provoked so divergent a criticism in Germany.

On the whole, the tragedy seems to be one of those daring, even profane assaults on elemental questions by ways that are untrodden if not forbidden. It is a wonderful type of Romanticist poetry in the bold choice of subject and in the intense vigor and beauty of the verse. Coming with a shock upon the classic days of German poetry, it met with a stern rebuke from the great Goethe. But a century later we must surely halt in following the lead of so severe a censor. The beauty of diction alone seems a surety of a sound content,—as when Penthesilea exclaims:

"A hero man can be—a Titan—in distress,
But like a god is he when rapt in blessedness."

An almost convincing symbolism has been suggested of the latent meaning of the poem by a modern critic,†—a symbolism that seems wonderfully reflected in Wolff's music. The charge of perverted passion can be based only on certain lines, and these are spoken within the period of madness that has overcome the heroine. This brings us to the final point which may suggest the main basic fault in the poem, considered as art. At least it is certainly a question whether pure madness can ever be a fitting subject in the hero of a tragedy. Ophelia is an episode; Hamlet's madness has never been finally determined. Though the Erinnys hunted Orestes in more than one play,

* German, 1776–1811.

†Kuno Francke. See the notes of Philip Hale in the programme book of the Boston Symphony Orchestra of April 3–4, 1908.

yet no single Fury could, after all, be the heroine of tragedy. Penthesilea became in the crisis a pure Fury, and though she may find here her own defense, the play may not benefit by the same plea. On the other hand, the madness is less a reality than an impression of the Amazons who cannot understand the heroine's conflicting feelings. There is no one moment in the play when the hearer's sympathy for the heroine is destroyed by a clear sense of her insanity.

For another word on the point of symbolism, it must be remembered that the whole plot is one of supernatural legend where somehow human acts and motives need not conform to conventional rule, and where symbolic meaning, as common reality disappears, is mainly eminent. It is in this same spirit that the leading virtues of the race, of war or of peace, are typified by feminine figures.

The Tragedy is not divided into acts; it has merely four and twenty scenes—upon the battlefield of Troy. The characters are Penthesilea, Queen of the Amazons; her chief leaders, Prothoe, Meroe and Asteria, and the high priestess of Diana. Of the Greeks there are Achilles, Odysseus, Diomede and Antilochus. Much of the fighting and other action is not seen, but is reported either by messengers or by present witnesses of a distant scene.

The play begins with the battle raging between Greeks and Amazons. Penthesilea with her hosts amazes the Greeks by attacking equally the Trojans, her reputed allies. She mows down the ranks of the Trojans, and yet refuses all proffers of the Greeks.

Thus early we have the direct, uncompromising spirit,—a kind of feminine Prometheus. The first picture of the heroine is of a Minerva in full array, stony of gaze and of expression until—she sees Achilles. Here early comes the conflict of two elemental passions. Penthesilea recoils from the spell and dashes again into her ambiguous warfare. For once Greeks and Trojans are forced to fight in common defence.

"The raging Queen with blows of thunder struck
As she would cleave the whole race of the Greeks
Down to its roots. . . .
. . . . . .
More of the captives did she take
Than she did leave us eyes to count the list,
Or arms to set them free again.
. . . . . .
Often it seemed as if a special hate
Against Achilles did possess her breast.
. . . . . .
Yet in a later moment, when
His life was given straight into her hands,
Smiling she gave it back, as though a present;
His headlong course to Hades she did stay."

In midst of the dual battle between Achilles and the Queen, a Trojan prince comes storming and strikes a treacherous blow against the armor of the Greek.

"The Queen is stricken pale; for a brief moment
Her arms hang helpless by her sides; and then,
Shaking her locks about her flaming cheeks,
Dashes her sword like lightning in his throat,
And sends him rolling to Achilles' feet."

The Greek leaders resolve to retreat from the futile fight and to call Achilles from the mingled chase of love and war.

Achilles is now reported taken by the Amazons. The battle is vividly depicted: Achilles caught on a high ledge with his war-chariot; the Amazon Queen storming the height from below. The full scene is witnessed from the stage,—Penthesilea pursuing almost alone; Achilles suddenly dodges; the Queen as quickly halts and rears her horse; the Amazons fall in a mingled heap; Achilles escapes, though wounded. But he refuses to follow his

companions to the camp; he swears to bring home the Queen wooed in the bloody strife of her own seeking.

Penthesilea recoils with like vehemence from the entreaties of her maids, intent upon the further battle, resolved to overcome the hero or to die. She forbids the Festival of Roses until she has vanquished Achilles. In her rage she banishes her favorite Prothoe from her presence, but in a quick revulsion takes her back.

In the next scene the high priestess and the little Amazon maids prepare the Feast, which Penthesilea had ordered in her confident attack upon the fleeing Greeks. One of the Rose-maidens recounts the passing scene of the Queen's amazing action. The indignant priestess sends her command to the Queen to return to the celebration. Though all the royal suite fling themselves in her path, Penthesilea advances to the dual battle.*

In a renewal of her personal contest, regardless of the common cause, and in her special quest of a chosen husband, Penthesilea has broken the sacred law.

The flight now follows of the Amazon hosts. When the two combatants meet in the shock of lances, the Queen falls in the dust; her pallor is reflected in Achilles' face. Leaping from his horse, he bends o'er her, calls her by names, and woos life back into her frame. Her faithful maids, whom she has forbidden to harm Achilles, lead her away. And here begins the seeming madness of the Queen when she confesses her love. For a moment she yields to her people's demands, but the sight of the rose-wreaths kindles her rage anew. Prothoe defends her in these lines:

* The law of the Amazons commanded them to wage war as told them by the oracle of Mars. The prisoners were brought to the Feast of Roses and wedded by their captors. After a certain time they were sent back to their homes. All male children of the tribe were put to death.

"Of life the highest blessing she attempted.
Grazing she almost grasped. Her hands now fail her
For any other lesser goal to reach."

In the last part of the scene the Queen falls more and deeper into madness. It is only in a too literal spirit that one will find an oblique meaning,—by too great readiness to discover it. In reality there seems to be an intense conflict of opposite emotions in the heroine: the pure woman's love, without sense of self; and the wild overpowering greed of achievement. Between these grinding stones she wears her heart away. A false interpretation of decadent theme comes from regarding the two emotions as mingled, instead of alternating in a struggle.

Achilles advances, having flung away his armor. Prothoe persuades him to leave the Queen, when she awakes, in the delusion that she has conquered and that he is the captive. Thus when she beholds the hero, she breaks forth into the supreme moment of exaltation and of frenzied triumph. The main love scene follows:

Penthesilea tells Achilles the whole story of the Amazons, the conquest of the original tribe, the rising of the wives of the murdered warriors against the conquerors; the destruction of the right breast (*A-mazon*); the dedication of the "brides of Mars" to war and love in one. In seeking out Achilles the Queen has broken the law. But here again appears the double symbolic idea: Achilles meant to the heroine not love alone, but the overwhelming conquest, the great achievement of her life.

The first feeling of Penthesilea, when disillusioned, is of revulsive anger at a kind of betrayal. The Amazons recover ground in a wild desire to save their Queen, and they do rescue her, after a parting scene of the lovers. But Penthesilea curses the triumph that snatches her away; the high priestess rebukes her, sets her free of her royal duties, to follow her love if she will. The Queen is driven

from one mood to another, of devoted love, burning ambition and mortal despair.

Achilles now sends a challenge to Penthesilea, knowing the Amazon conditions. Against all entreaty the Queen accepts, not in her former spirit, but in the frenzy of desperate endeavor, in the reawakened rage of her ambition, spurred and pricked by the words of the priestess.

The full scene of madness follows. She calls for her dogs and elephants, and the full accoutrement of battle. Amidst the terror of her own warriors, the rolling of thunder, she implores the gods' help to crush the Greek. In a final touch of frenzy she aims a dart at her faithful Prothoe.

The battle begins, Achilles in fullest confidence in Penthesilea's love, unfrightened by the wild army of dogs and elephants. The scene, told by the present on-lookers, is heightened by the cries of horror and dismay of the Amazons themselves.

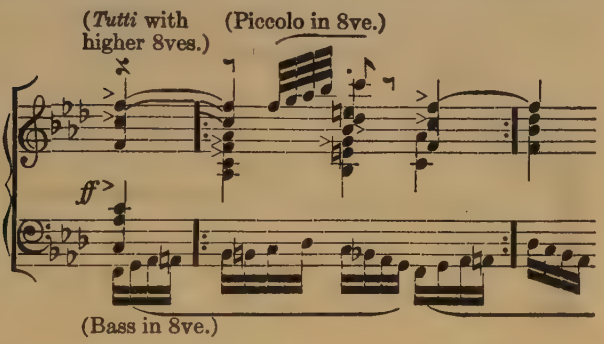
Achilles falls; Penthesilea, a living Fury, dashes upon him with her dogs in an insane orgy of blood. The Queen in the culminating scene is greeted by the curses of the high priestess. Prothoe masters her horror and turns back to soothe the Queen. Penthesilea, unmindful of what has passed, moves once more through the whole gamut of her torturing emotions, and is almost calmed when she spies the bier with the hero's body. The last blow falls when upon her questions she learns the full truth of her deed. The words she utters (that have been cited by the hostile critics) may well be taken as the ravings of hopeless remorse, with a symbolic play of words. She dies, as she proclaims, by the knife of her own anguish.

The last lines of Prothoe are a kind of epilogue:

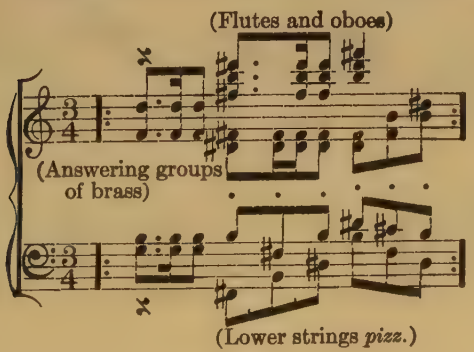
"She sank because too proud and strong she flourished.
The half-decayéd oak withstands the tempest;
The vigorous tree is headlong dashed to earth
Because the storm has struck into its crown." *

* Translations, when not otherwise credited, are by the author.

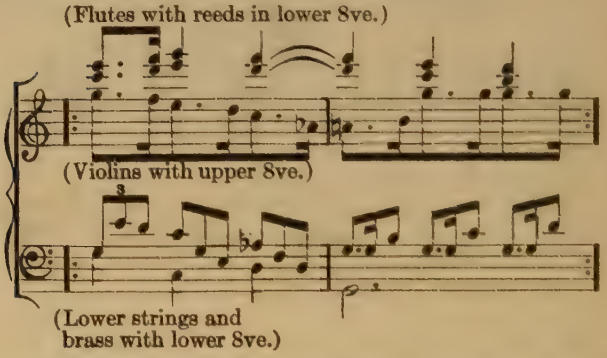
The opening scene—"Lively, vehement: Departure of the Amazons for Troy"—begins impetuous and hefty with big strokes of the throbbing motive,



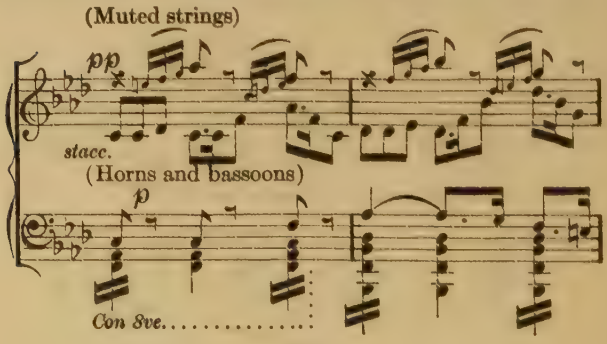
the majestic rhythm coursing below, lashed by a quicker phrase above. Suddenly trumpets sound, somewhat more slowly, a clarion call answered by a choir of other trumpets and horns in enchanting retort of changing harmonies. Ever a fresh color of



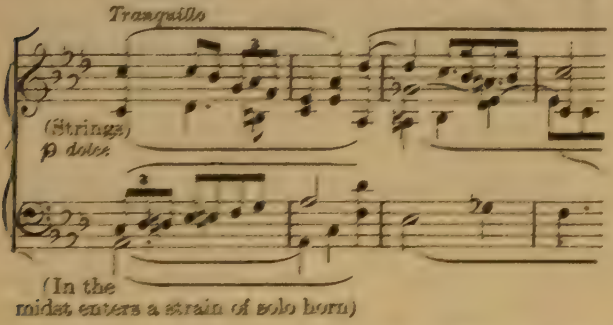
tone sounds in the call of the brass, as if here or yonder on the battle-field. Sometimes it is almost too sweetly chanting for fierce war. But presently it turns to a wilder mood and breaks in galloping pace into a true chorus of song with clear cadence.



The joyful tinge is quickly lost in the sombre hue of another phase of war-song that has a touch of funeral trip (though it is all in ¾ time):



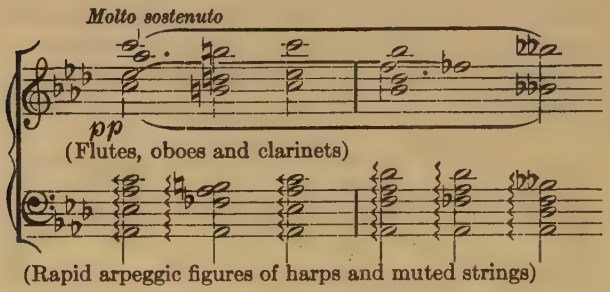
A melody in the minor plays first in a choir of horns and bassoons, later in united strings, accompanied by soft rolls of drums and a touch of the lowest brass. Harp and higher woodwind are added, but the volume is never transcendent save in a single burst when it is quickly hushed to the first ominous whisper. Out of this sombre song flows a romance of tender sentiment, *tranquillo* in strings, followed by the wood. The crossing threads of expressive melody



rise in instant renewal of stress and agitation. The joy of battle has returned, but it seems that the passion of love burns in midst of the glow of battle, each in its separate struggle, and both together in one fatal strife. The sombre melody returns in full career, dying down to a pause.*

* In a somewhat literal commentary attributed to Dr. Richard Batka, the Amazons here, "having reached their destination, go into night-encampment—as represented by the subdued roll of the kettle-drums, with which the movement concludes."

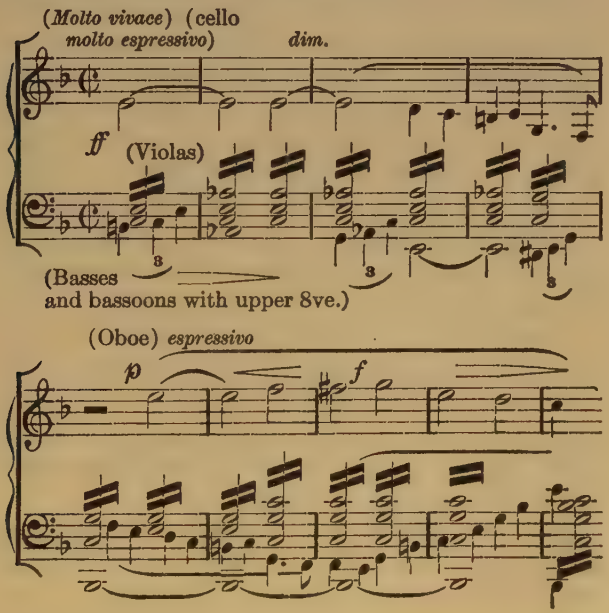
Molto sostenuto, in changed rhythm of three slow beats, comes "Penthesilea's Dream of the Feast of Roses." Over a thick cluster of harmonies in harp and strings the higher wood sing a new song in long drawn lyric notes with ravishing turns of tonal color.



—a dual song and in many groups of two. The tranquil current of the dream is gradually disturbed; the main burden is dimmed in hue and in mood. Faster, more fitful is the flow of melody, with hostile intruding motive below; it dashes at last into the tragic phase—Combats; Passions; Madness; Destruction—in very rapid tempo of 2/2 rhythm:

In broad, masterful pace, big contrary figures sweep up and down, cadencing in almost joyous chant, gliding, indeed, into a pure hymn, as of triumph (that harks back to the chorussing song in the beginning).

Throughout the poem the musical symbols as well as the motives of passion are closely intertwined. Thus the identity of the impetuous phrase of the

very beginning is clear with the blissful theme of the Dream of the Feast of Roses. Here, at the end of the chorussing verse is a play or a strife of phrases where we cannot escape a symbolic intent. To *tremolo* of violas the cellos hold a tenor of descending melody over a rude rumbling phrase of the basses of wood and strings, while the oboe sings in the treble an expressive answer of ascending notes. A conflict is

evident, of love and ambition, of savage and of gentle passion, of chaos and of beauty. At the height, the

lowest brass intrude a brutal note of triumph of the descending theme. To the victory of Pride succeeds a crisis of passionate yearning. But at the very height is a plunge into the fit of madness, the fatal descending phrase (in trombones) is ever followed by furious pelting spurts in the distorted main theme.

At last the paroxysm abates, throbbing ever slower, merging into the tender song of the Dream that now rises to the one great burst of love-passion. But it ends in a wild rage that turns right into the war-song of the beginning. And this is much fuller of incident than before. Violins now ring an hostile motive (the former rumbling phrase of basses) from the midst of the plot against the main theme in trumpets. Instead of the former pageantry, here is the pure frenzy of actual war. The trumpet melodies resound amidst the din of present battle. Instead of the other gentler episodes, here is a more furious raving of the mad Queen (in the hurried main motive), where we seem to see the literal dogs of war let loose and spurred on,—each paroxysm rising to a higher shock.

Great is the vehemence of speed and sound as the dull doom of destruction drones in the basses against a grim perversion of the yearning theme above, that overwhelms the scene with a final shriek.

Slowly the dream of love breathes again, rises to a fervent burst, then yields to the fateful chant and ends in a whisper of farewell.

CHAPTER XVII

MAHLER *

IN Mahler the most significant sign is a return to a true counterpoint, as against a mere overlading of themes, that began in Wagner and still persists in Strauss,—an artificial kind of structure that is never conceived as a whole.

While we see in Mahler much of the duophonic manner of his teacher, Bruckner, in the work of the younger man the barren art is crowned with the true fire of a sentient poet. So, if Bruckner had little to say, he showed the way to others. And Mahler, if he did not quite emerge from the mantle of Beethoven, is a link towards a still greater future. The form and the technic still seem, as with most modern symphonies, too great for the message. It is another phase of orchestral virtuosity, of intellectual strain, but with more of poetic energy than in the symphonies of the French or other Germans.

In other forms we see this happy reaction towards ancient art, as in the organ music of a Reger. But in the Finale of Mahler's Fifth Symphony there is a true serenity, a new phase of symphony, without the climactic stress of traditional triumph, yet none the less joyous in essence.

We cannot help rejoicing that in a sincere and

* Gustav Mahler, 1860–1911.

poetic design of symphony is blended a splendid renaissance of pure counterpoint, that shines clear above the modern spurious pretence. The Finale of Mahler's Fifth Symphony is one of the most inspired conceptions of counterpoint in all music. In it is realized the full dream of a revival of the art in all its glorious estate.

SYMPHONY NO. 5

I.—1. *Funeral March.*
2. *In stormy motion (with greatest vehemence).*
II.—3. *Scherzo (with vigor,—not too fast).*
III.—4. *Adagietto (very slowly).*
5. *Rondo-Finale (allegro).*

Mahler's Fifth Symphony, whatever be its intrinsic merit, that can be decided only by time and wear, undoubtedly marks a high point of orchestral splendor, in the regard of length and of the complexity of resources. By the latter is meant not so much the actual list of instruments as the pervading and accumulating use of thematic machinery.*

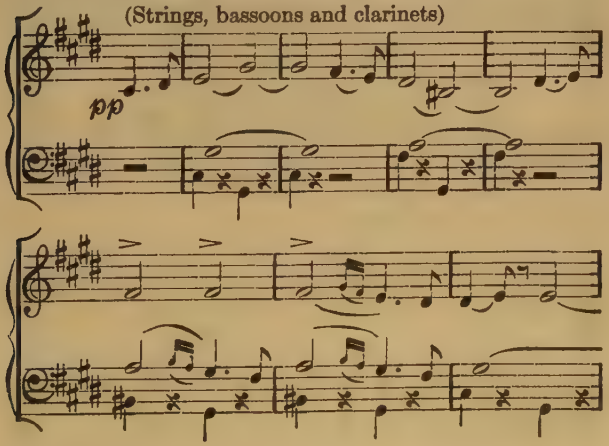
The plan of movements is very original and in a way, two-fold. There are three great divisions, of

* The symphony is probably the longest instrumental work that had appeared at the time of its production in 1904. The list of instruments comprises 4 flutes, 3 oboes, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons, contra-bassoon, 6 horns, 4 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, kettle-drums, cymbals, bass-drum, snare-drum, triangle, glockenspiel, gong, harp and strings.

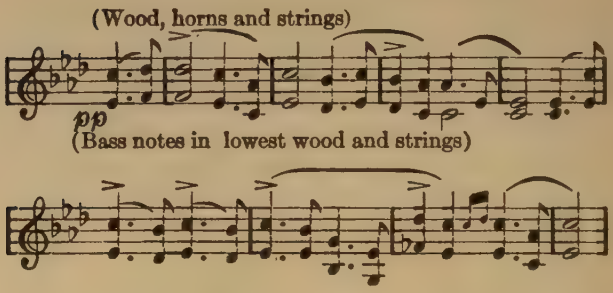
Compared with D'Indy's Second Symphony, the Fifth of Mahler has a larger body of brass as well as of wood-wind.

which the first comprises a Funeral March, and an untitled Allegro in vehement motion. The second division has merely the single movement, Scherzo. In the third are an Adagietto and a Rondo Finale.

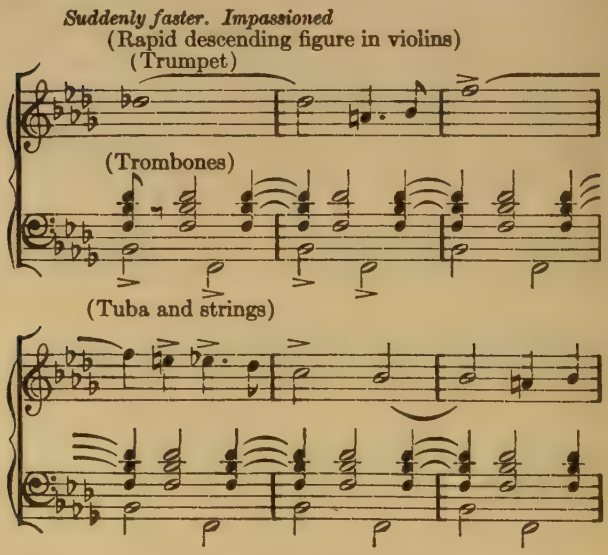
I.—1. Funeral March.—A call of trumpet, of heroic air and tread, is answered by strident chords ending in a sonorous motive of horns that leads to the funeral trip, of low brass. The mournful song of the principal melody appears presently in the strings, then returns to the funeral trip and to the strident chords. The first trumpet motive now sounds with this clanging phrase and soon the original call abounds in other brass. The deep descending notes of the horns recur and the full song of the funeral melody much extended, growing into a duet of cellos and high wood-wind,



and further into hymnal song on a new motive.

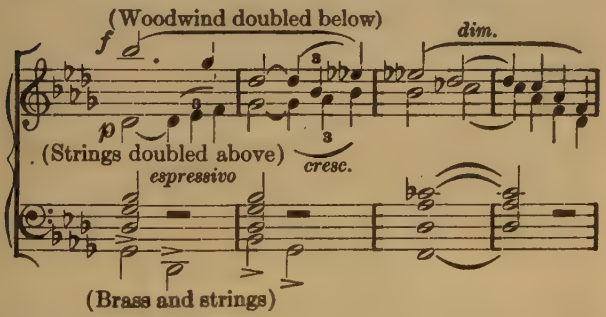


So the various melodies recur with new mood and manner. Suddenly, in fierce abandon, a martial tramp of the full band resounds, in gloomy minor,



the violins in rapid rage of wailing figure: the trumpet strikes the firm note of heroic plaint.

Wild grief breaks out on all sides, the strings singing in passionate answer to the trumpet, the high wood carrying on the rapid motion. At the height of the storm the woodwind gain control with measured rhythm of choral melody. Or perhaps the real height is the expressive double strain, in gentle pace, of the strings, and the wood descending from on high.

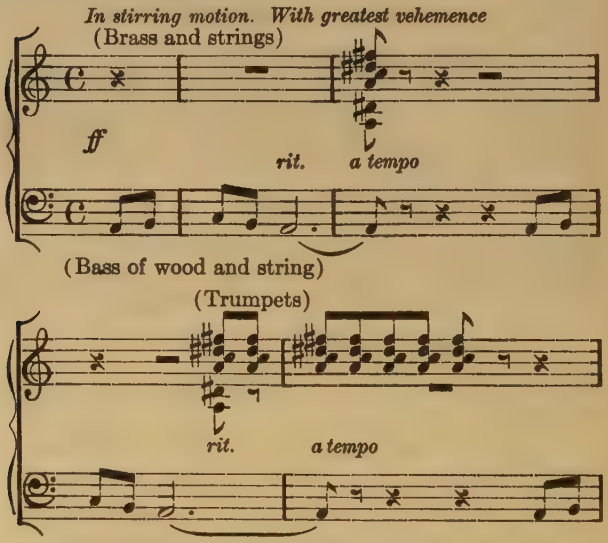


The duet is carried on in wilder mood by most of the voices.

A return to the solemn pace comes by imperceptible change, the softer hues of grief merging with the fiercer cries. Now various strains sound together, —the main funeral melody in the woodwind.

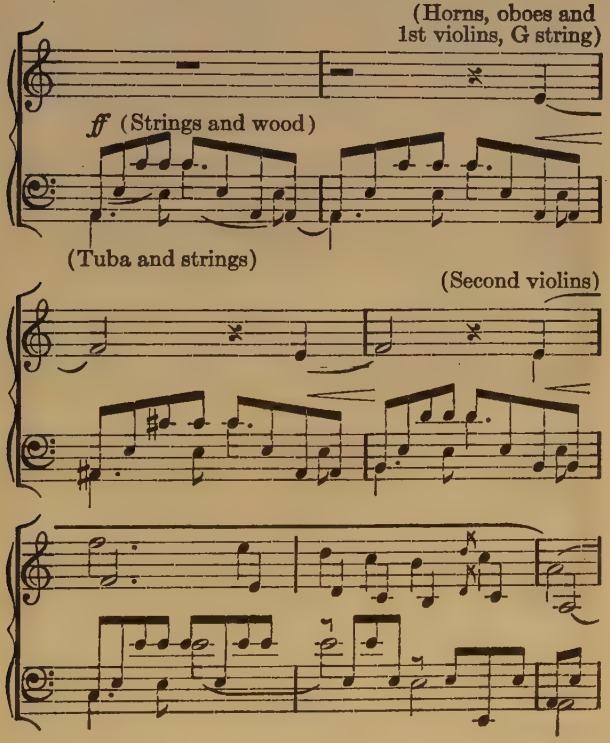
In the close recurs the full flow of funeral song, with the hymnal harmonies. In the refrain of the stormy duet the sting of passion is gone; the whole plaint dies away amid the fading echoes of the trumpet call.

I.—2. The second movement, the real first Allegro, is again clearly in two parts. Only, the relative paces are exactly reversed from the first movement. In tempestuous motion, with greatest vehemence, a rushing motive of the basses is stopped by a chord of brass and strings,—the chord itself reverberating to the lower rhythm.



Throughout the whole symphony is the dual theme, each part spurring the other. Here presently are phrases in conflicting motion, countermarching in a stormy maze. It is all, too, like noisy preparation,—a manœuvring of forces before the battle. Three distinct figures there are before a blast of horn in slower notes, answered by shrill call in highest

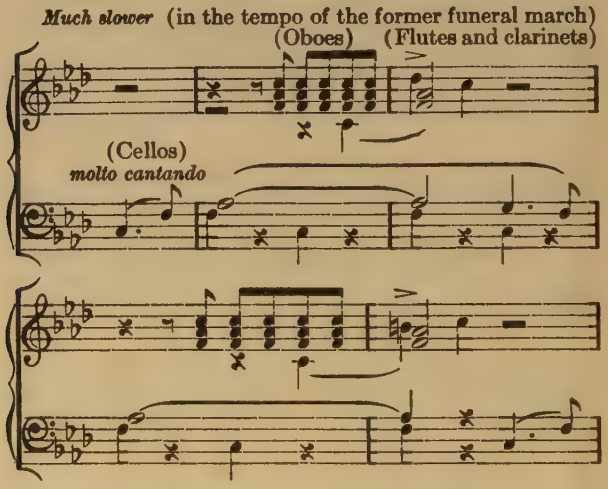
wood. There enters a regular, rhythmic gait and a clearer tune, suggested by the call.



In the brilliant medley there is ever a new figure we had not perceived. So when the tune has been told, trumpets and horns begin with what seems almost the main air, and the former voices sound like mere heralds. Finally the deep trombones and tuba

enter with a sonorous call. Yet the first rapid trip of all has the main legend.

As the quicker figures gradually retire, a change of pace appears, to the tramp of funeral. Yet the initial and incident strains are of the former text. Out of it weaves the new, slower melody:



Throughout, the old shrill call sounds in soft lament. Hardly like a tune, a discourse rather, it winds along, growing and changing naïvely ever to a new phrase. And the soft calls about seem part of the melody. An expressive line rising in the clarinet harks back to one of the later strains of the funeral march.

The second melody or answer (in low octaves of

strings) is a scant disguise of the lower tune in the stormy duet of the first movement. Yet all the strains move in the gentle, soothing pace and mood until suddenly awakened to the first vehement rhythm.

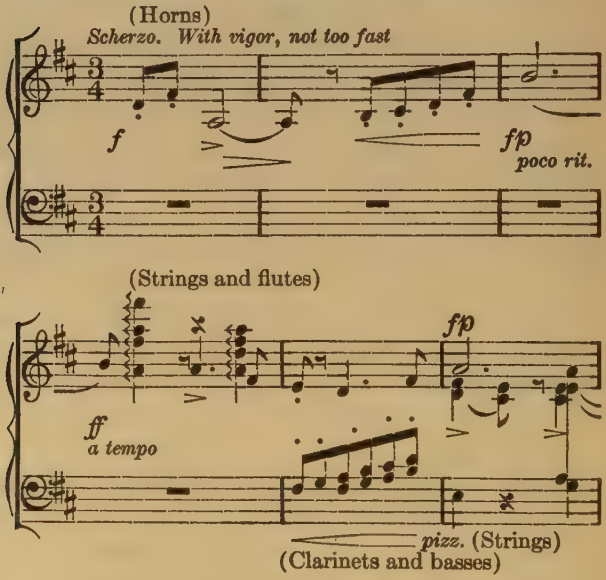
Before the slower verse returns is a long plaint of cellos to softest roll of drums. The gentle calls that usher in the melody have a significant turn, upwards instead of down. All the figures of the solemn episode appear more clearly.

On the spur of the hurrying main motive of trumpets the first pace is once more regained.

A surprise of plot is before us. In sudden recurrence of funeral march the hymnal song of the first movement is heard. As suddenly, we are plunged into the first joyful scene of the symphony. Here it is most striking how the call of lament has become triumphant, as it seems without a change of note. And still more wonderful,—the same melody that first uttered a storm of grief, then a gentle sadness, now has a firm exultant ring. To be sure, it is all done with the magic trip of bass,—as a hymn may be a perfect dance.

Before the close we hear the first fanfare of trumpet from the opening symphony, that has the ring of a motto of the whole. At the very end is a transfigured entrance,—very slowly and softly, to a celestial touch of harp, of the first descending figure of the movement.

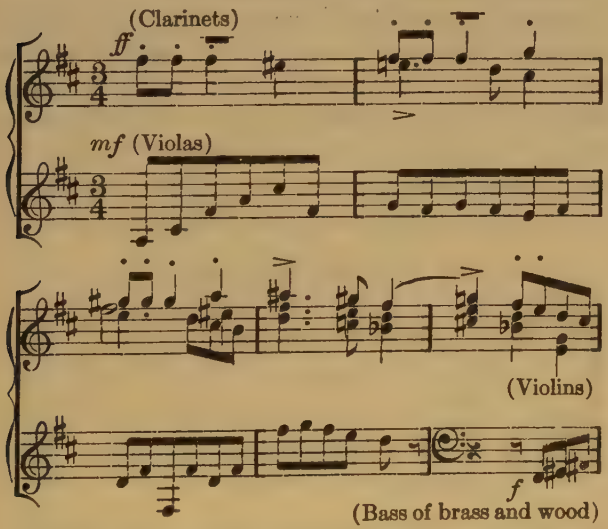
II.—3. Scherzo. Jovial in high degree, the Scherzo begins with the thematic complexity of modern fashion. In dance tune of three beats horns lead off with a jolly call; strings strike dancing chords; the lower wind play a rollicking answer, but together with the horns, both strains continuing in dancing duet. Still the saucy call of horns seems the main text, though no single tune reigns alone.



The violins now play above the horns; then the cellos join and there is a three-part song of independent tunes, all in the dance. So far in separate

voices it is now taken up by full chorus, though still the basses sing one way, trebles another, and the middle horns a third. And now the high trumpet strikes a phrase of its own. But they are all in dancing swing, of the fibre of the first jolly motive.

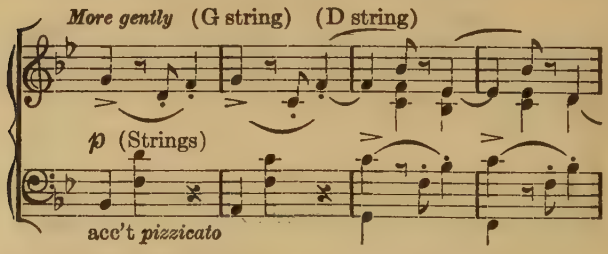
A new episode is started by a quicker *obligato* of violins, in neighboring minor, that plays about a fugue of the woodwind on an incisive theme where the cadence has a strange taste of bitter sweet harmony in the modern Gallic manner.



Horns and violins now pursue their former duet, but in the changed hue of minor where the old concords are quaintly perverted. But this is only to give

a merrier ring to the bright madrigal that follows in sweetly clashing higher wood, with the trip still in the violins. Thence the horns and violins break again into the duet in the original key. Here the theme is wittily inverted in the bass, while other strings sing another version above.

So the jolly dance and the quaint fugue alternate; a recurring phrase is carried to a kind of dispute, with opposite directions above and below and much augmented motion in the strings.

In the dance so far, in "three time," is ever the vigorous stamp on the third beat, typical of the German peasant "*Ländler.*" Here of a sudden is a change as great as possible within the continuing dance of three steps. "More tranquil" in pace, in soft strings, without a trace of the *Ländler* stamp, is a pure waltz in pretty imitation of tuneful theme.

And so the return to the vigorous rough dance is the more refreshing. The merry mood yields to a darker temper. "Wild" the strings rush in angry fugue on their rapid phrase; the quaint theme is torn

to shreds, recalling the fierce tempest of earlier symphony.

But the first sad note of the Scherzo is in the recitative of horn, after the lull. A phrase of quiet reflection, with which the horn concludes the episode as with an "*envoi,*" is now constantly rung; it is wrought from the eerie tempest; like refined metal the melody is finally poured; out of its guise is the theme now of mournful dance.

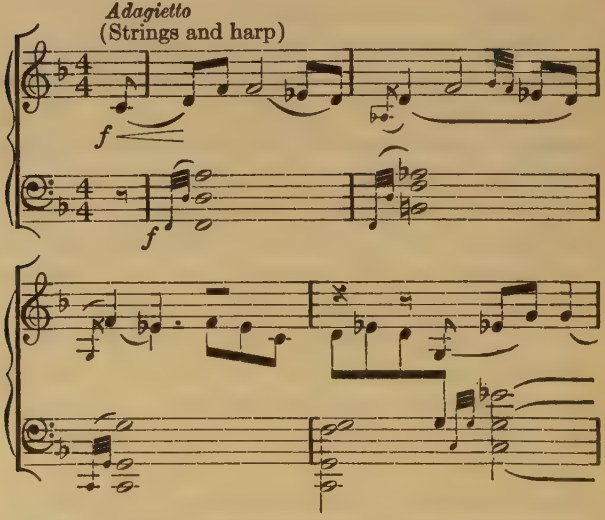
"Shyly" the tune of the waltz answers in softest oboe. In all kinds of verses it is sung, in expressive duet of lower wood, of the brass, then of high reeds; in solo trumpet with countertune of oboe, finally in high flutes. Here we see curiously, as the first themes reappear, a likeness with the original trumpet-call of the symphony. In this guise of the first dance-theme the movements are bound together. The *envoi* phrase is here evident throughout.

At this mystic stage, to pure dance trip of low strings the waltz reënters very softly in constant growing motion, soon attaining the old pace and a new fulness of sound. A fresh spur is given by a wild motion of strings, as in the fugal episode; a new height of tempest is reached where again the distorted shreds of first dance appear, with phrases of the second. From it like sunshine from the clouds breaks quickly the original merry trip of dance.

The full cycle of main Scherzo returns with all stress of storm and tragedy. But so fierce is the tempest that we wonder how the glad mood can pre-

vail. And the sad *envoi* returns and will not be shaken off. The sharp clash of fugue is rung again and again, as if the cup must be drained to the drop. Indeed, the serious later strain does prevail, all but the final blare of the saucy call of brass.*

III.—4. Adagietto.† "Very slowly" first violins carry the expressive song that is repeated by the violas.



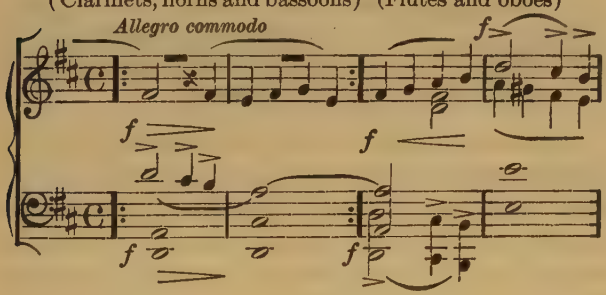
* In the Scherzo are chimes, accenting the tune of the dance, and even castanets, besides triangle and other percussion. The second movement employs the harp and triangle.

† The Adagietto is scored simply for harp and strings; nor are the latter unusually divided.

A climax is reached by all the violins in unison. A new glow, with quicker motion, is in the episode, where the violins are sharply answered by the violas, rising to a dramatic height and dying away in a vein of rare lyric utterance.

It is all indeed a pure lyric in tones.

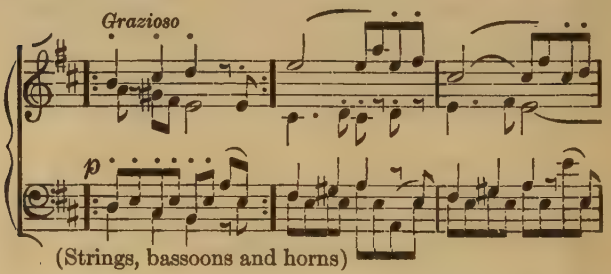
III.—5. Rondo-Finale. The whole has the dainty, light-treading humor that does not die of its own vehemence. Somewhat as in the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven,—tyrant of classical traditions, the themes appear right in the beginning as if on muster-roll, each in separate, unattended song. A last chance cadence passes down the line of voices and settles into a comfortable rhythm as prevailing theme, running in melodious extension, and merging after a



hearty conclusion in the jovially garrulous fugue.

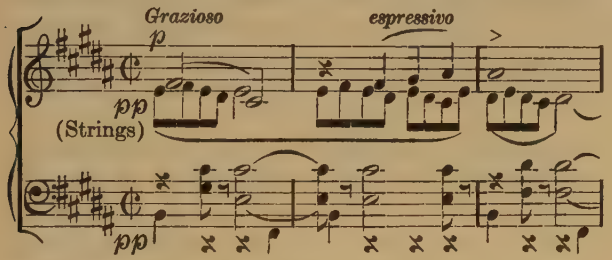
Here the counter-theme proves to be one of the initial tunes and takes a leading rôle until another charming strain appears on high,—a pure nursery

rhyme crowning the learned fugue. Even this is a guise of one of the original motives in the mazing medley, where it seems we could trace the ancestry of each if we could linger and if it really mattered. And yet there is a rare charm in these subtle turns; it is the secret relevance that counts the most.

The fugue reaches a sturdy height with one of the first themes in lusty horns, and suddenly falls into a pleasant jingle, prattling away in the train of important figures, the kind that is pertinent with no outer likeness.

Everywhere, to be sure, the little rhythmic cadence appears; the whole sounds almost like the old children's canon on "Three Blind Mice"; indeed the themal inversion is here the main tune. Then in the bass the phrase sounds twice as slow as in the horns. There are capers and horseplay; a sudden shift of tone; a false alarm of fugue; suddenly we are back in the first placid verse of the rhythmic motive.

Here is a new augmentation in resonant horns and middle strings, and the melodious extension. A

former motive that rings out in high reed, seems to have the function of concluding each episode.

A new stretch of fugue appears with new counter-theme, that begins in long-blown notes of horns. It really is no longer a fugue; it has lapsed into mere smooth-rolling motion underneath a verse of primal tune. And presently another variant of graceful episode brings a delicious lilt,—*tender, but expressive.*

With all the subtle design there is no sense of the lamp, in the gentle murmur of quicker figure or melodious flow of upper theme. Moving is the lyric power and sweetness of this multiple song. As to themal relation,—one feels like regarding it all as inspired madrigal, where the maze and medley is the thing, where the tunes are not meant to be distinguished. It becomes an abandoned orgy of clearest counterpoint. Throughout is a blending of fugue and of children's romp, anon with the tenderness of lullaby and even the glow of love-song. A brief mystic verse, with slow descending strain in the high wood, preludes the returning gambol of running strings, where

the maze of fugue or canon is in the higher flowing song, with opposite course of answering tune, and a height of jolly revel, where the bright trumpet pours out the usual concluding phrase. The rhythmic episode, in whimsical change, here sings with surprise of lusty volume. So the merry round goes on to a big resonant *Amen* of final acclaim, where the little phrase steals out as naturally as in the beginning.

Then in quicker pace it sounds again all about, big and little, and ends, after a touch of modern Gallic scale, in opposing runs, with a last light, saucy fling.

Mahler, we feel again, realizes all the craving that Bruckner breeds for a kernel of feeling in the shell of counterpoint. Though we cannot deny a rude breach of ancient rule and mode, there is in Mahler a genuine, original, individual quality of polyphonic art that marks a new stage since the first in Bach and a second in Beethoven. It is this bold revel in the neglected sanctuary of the art that is most inspiriting for the future. And as in all true poetry, this o'erleaping audacity of design is a mere expression of simplest gaiety.

CHAPTER XVIII

RICHARD STRAUSS *

MUCH may be wisely written on the right limits of music as a depicting art. The distinction is well drawn between actual delineation, of figure or event, and the mere suggestion of a mood. It is no doubt a fine line, and fortunately; for the critic must beware of mere negative philosophy, lest what he says cannot be done, be refuted in the very doing. If Lessing had lived a little later, he might have extended the principles of his "Laocöon" beyond poetry and sculpture into the field of music. Difficult and ungrateful as is the task of the critical philosopher, it must be performed. There is every reason here as elsewhere why men should see and think clearly.

It is perhaps well that audiences should cling to the simple verdict of beauty, that they should not be led astray by the vanity of finding an answer; else the composer is tempted to create mere riddles. So we may decline to find precise pictures, and content ourselves with the music. The search is really time wasted; it is like a man digging in vain for gold and missing the sunshine above.

Strauss may have his special meanings. But the

* Born in 1864.

beauty of the work is for us all-important. We may expect him to mark his scenes. We may not care to crack that kind of a nut.* It is really not good eating. Rather must we be satisfied with the pure beauty of the fruit, without a further hidden kernel. There is no doubt, however, of the ingenuity of these realistic touches. It is interesting, here, to contrast Strauss with Berlioz, who told his stories largely by extra-musical means, such as the funeral trip, the knell of bells, the shepherd's reed. Strauss at this point joins with the Liszt-Wagner group in the use of symbolic motives. Some of his themes have an effect of tonal word-painting. The roguish laugh of Eulenspiegel is unmistakable.

It is in the harmonic rather than the melodic field that the fancy of Strauss soars the freest. It is here that his music bears an individual stamp of beauty. Playing in and out among the edges of the main harmony with a multitude of ornamental phrases, he gains a new shimmer of brilliancy. Aside from instrumental coloring, where he seems to outshine all others in dazzling richness and startling contrasts, he adds to the lustre by a deft playing in the overtones of his harmonies, casting the whole in warmest hue.

If we imagine the same riotous license in the realm of tonal noise,—cacophony, that is, where the aim is not to enchant, but to frighten, bewilder, or amaze;

* Strauss remarked that in *Till Eulenspiegel* he had given the critics a hard nut to crack.

to give some special foil to sudden beauty; or, last of all, for graphic touch of story, we have another striking element of Strauss's art. The anticipation of a Beethoven in the drum of the Scherzo of the Fifth Symphony, or the rhythmic whims of a Schumann in his Romantic piano pieces suggest the path of much of this license. Again, as passing notes may run without heed of harmony, since ancient days, so long sequences of other figures may hold their moving organ-point against clashing changes of tonality.

Apart from all this is the modern "counterpoint," where, if it is quite the real thing, Strauss has outdone the boldest dreams of ancient school men. But with the lack of cogent form, and the multitude of small motives it seems a different kind of art. We must get into the view-point of romantic web of infinite threads, shimmering or jarring in infinite antagonism (of delayed harmony). By the same process comes always the tremendous accumulation towards the end. As the end and essence of the theme seems a graphic quality rather than intrinsic melody, so the main pith and point of the music lies in the weight and power of these final climaxes.

TOD UND VERKLÄRUNG (DEATH AND TRANSFIGURATION), TONE POEM

It may be well to gather a few general impressions before we attempt the study of a work radical in its departure from the usual lines of tonal design.

There can be no doubt of the need of vigilance if

we are to catch the relevance of all the strains. To be sure, perhaps this perception is meant to be subconscious. In any case the consciousness would seem to ensure a full enjoyment.

It is all based on the motif of the Wagner drama and of the Liszt symphonies, and it is carried to quite as fine a point. Only here we have no accompanying words to betray the label of the theme. But in the quick flight of themes, how are we to catch the subtle meaning? The inter-relation seems as close as we care to look, until we are in danger of seeing no woods for the trees.

Again the danger of preconception is of the greatest. We may get our mind all on the meaning and all off the music. The clear fact is the themes do have a way of entering with an air of significance which they challenge us to find. The greatest difficulty is to distinguish the themes that grow out of each other, as a rose throws off its early petals, from those that have a mere chance similarity. Even this likeness may have its own intended meaning, or it may be all beside the mark. But we may lose not merely the musical, but even the dramatic sequence in too close a poring over themal derivation. On the other hand we may defy the composer himself and take simply what he gives, as if on first performance, before the commentators have had a chance to breed. And this may please him best in the end.

We must always attend more to the mood than to themal detail as everywhere in real music, after

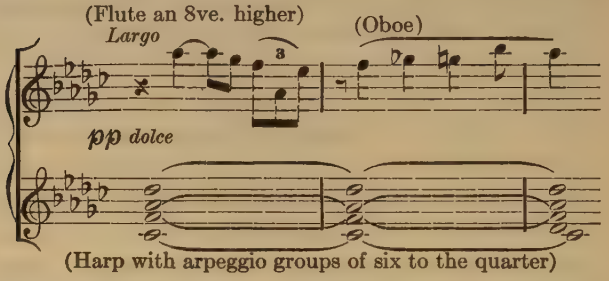
all. Moments of delight and triumph we know there are in this work. But they are mere instants. For it is all the feverish dream of death. There can be no earlier rest. Snatches they are of fancy, of illusion, as, says the priest in Œdipus, is all of life.

It may be worth while, too, to see how pairs of themes ever occur in Strauss, the second in answer, almost in protest, to the first. (It is not unlike the pleading in the Fifth Symphony of the second theme with the sense of doom in the first.) So we seem to find a motive of fate, and one of wondering, and striving; a theme of beauty and one of passion,—if we cared to tread on such a dangerous, tempting ground. Again, we may find whole groups of phrases expressive of one idea, as of beauty, and another of anxious pursuit. Thus we escape too literal a themal association.

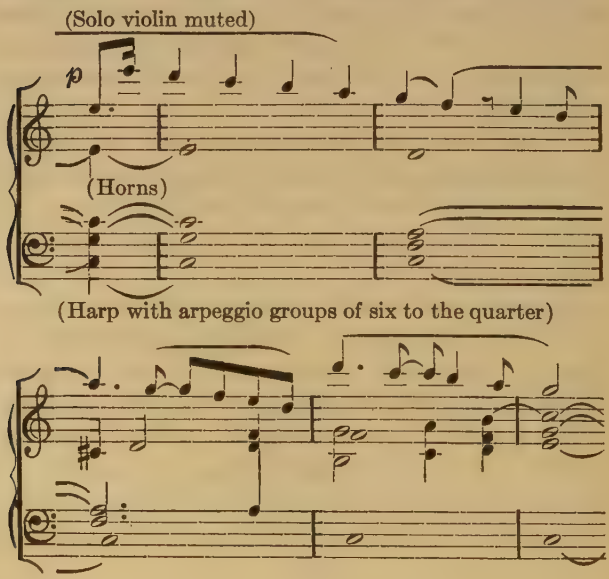
Trying a glimpse from the score pure and simple, we find a poem, opposite the first page, that is said to have been written after the first production. So, reluctantly, we must wait for the mere reinforcement of its evidence.

Largo, in uncertain key, begins the throb of irregular rhythm (in strings) that Bach and Chopin and Wagner have taught us to associate with suffering. The first figure is a gloomy descent of pairs of chords, with a hopeless cry above (in the flutes). In the recurrence, the turn of chord is at last upward. A warmer hue of waving sounds (of harps) is poured about, and a gentle vision appears on high, shadowed

quickly by a theme of fearful wondering. The chords return as at first. A new series of descending tones



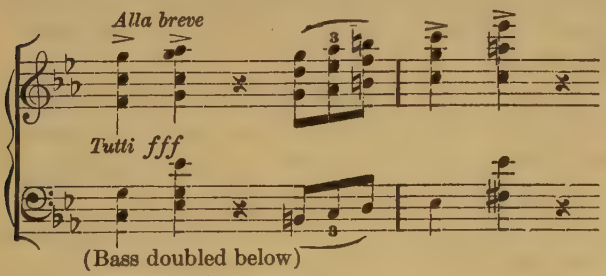
intrude, with a sterner sense of omen, and yield to a full melodic utterance of longing (again with the



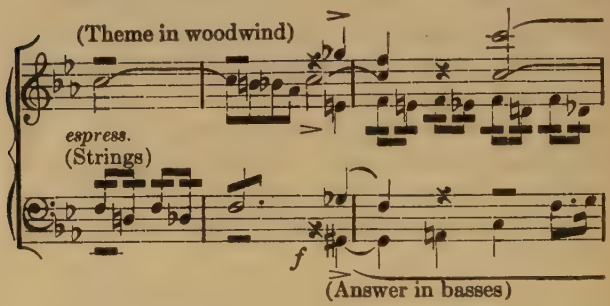
soothing play of harp), and in the midst a fresh theme of wistful fear. For a moment there is a brief glimpse of the former vision. Now the song, less of longing than of pure bliss, sings free and clear its descending lay in solo violin, though an answering phrase (in the horns) of upward striving soon rises from below. The vision now appears again, the wondering monitor close beside. The melancholy chords return to dim the beauty. As the descending theme recedes, the rising motive sings a fuller course on high with a new note of eager, anxious fear.

All these themes are of utmost pertinence in this evident prologue of the story. Or at least the germs of all the leading melodies are here.

In sudden turn of mood to high agitation, a stress of wild desire rings out above in pairs of sharp ascending chords, while below the wondering theme rises in growing tumult. A whirling storm of the two phrases ends in united burst like hymn of battle, on the line of the wondering theme, but infused with



resistless energy. Now sings a new discourse of warring phrases that are dimly traced to the phase of the blissful melody, above the theme of upward striv-



ing. They wing an eager course, undaunted by the harsh intruding chords. Into the midst presses the forceful martial theme. All four elements are clearly evident. The latest gains control, the other voices for the nonce merely trembling in obedient rhythm. But a new phase of the wistful motive appears, masterful but not o'ermastering, fiercely pressing upwards,—and a slower of the changed phrase of blissful song. The former attains a height of sturdy ascending stride.

In spite of the ominous stress of chords that grow louder with the increasing storm, something of assurance comes with the ascending stride. More and more this seems the dominant idea.

A new paroxysm of the warring themes rises to the first great climax where the old symbol of wondering

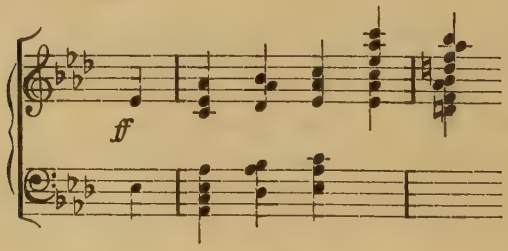
and striving attains a brief moment of assured ecstatic triumph.

In a new scene (*meno mosso*), to murmuring strings (where the theme of striving can possibly be caught) the blissful melody sings in full song, undisturbed save by the former figure that rises as if to grasp,—sings later, too, in close sequence of voices. After a short intervening verse—*leicht bewegt*—where the first vision appears for a moment, the song is resumed, still in a kind of shadowy chase of slow flitting voices, *senza espressione.* The rising, eager phrase is disguised in dancing pace, and grows to a graceful turn of tune. An end comes, *poco agitato,* with rude intrusion of the hymnal march in harsh contrast of rough discord; the note of anxious fear, too, strikes in again. But suddenly, *etwas breiter,* a new joyous mood frightens away the birds of evil omen.

Right in the midst of happenings, we must be warned against too close a view of individual theme. We must not forget that it is on the contrasted pairs and again the separate groups of phrases, where all have a certain common modal purpose, that lies the main burden of the story. Still if we must be curious for fine derivation, we may see in the new tune of exultant chorus the late graceful turn that now, reversing, ends in the former rising phrase. Against it sings the first line of blissful theme. And the first tune of graceful beauty also finds a place. But they

all make one single blended song, full of glad bursts and cadences.

Hardly dimmed in mood, it turns suddenly into a phase of languorous passion, in rich setting of pulsing harp, where now the later figures, all but the blissful theme, vanish before an ardent song of the wondering phrase. The motive of passionate desire rises and falls, and soars in a path of "endless melody," returning on its own line of flight, playing as if with its shadow, catching its own echo in the ecstasy of chase. And every verse ends with a new stress of the insistent upward stride, that grows ever in force and closes with big reverberating blasts. The theme of the vision joins almost in rough guise of utmost speed, and the rude marching song breaks in; somehow, though they add to the maze, they do not dispel the joy. The ruling phase of passion now rumbles fiercely in lowest depths. The theme of beauty rings in clarion wind and strings, and now the whole strife ends in clearest, overwhelming hymn of triumphant gladness, all in the strides of the old wondering, striving phrase.



The whole battle here is won. Though former moments are fought through again (and new melodies grow out of the old plaint), the triumphant shout is near and returns (ever from a fresh tonal quarter) to chase away the doubt and fear. All the former phrases sing anew, merging the tale of their strife in the recurring verse of united pæan. The song at last dies away, breaking like setting sun into glinting rays of celestial hue, that pale away into dullest murmur.

Still one returning paroxysm, of wild striving for eluding bliss, and then comes the close. From lowest depths shadowy tones sing herald phrases against dim, distorted figures of the theme of beauty,—that lead to a soft song of the triumphant hymn, *tranquillo,* in gentlest whisper, but with all the sense of gladness and ever bolder straying of the enchanting dream. After a final climax the song ends in slow vanishing echoes.

The poet Ritter is said to have added, after the production of the music, the poem printed on the score, of which the following is a rather literal translation:

In the miserable chamber,
Dim with flick'ring candlelight,
Lies a man on bed of sickness.
Fiercely but a moment past
Did he wage with Death the battle;
Worn he sinks back into sleep.
Save the clock's persistent ticking
Not a sound invades the room,

Where the gruesome quiet warns us
Of the neighborhood of Death.
O'er the pale, distended features
Plays a melancholy smile.
Is he dreaming at life's border
Of his childhood golden days?

But a paltry shrift of sleep
Death begrudges to his victim.
Cruelly he wakes and shakes him,
And the fight begins anew,—
Throb of life and power of death,
And the horror of the struggle.
Neither wins the victory.
Once again the stillness reigns.

Worn of battle, he relapses
Sleepless, as in fevered trance.
Now he sees before him passing
Of his life each single scene:
First the glow of childhood dawn,
Bright in purest innocence,
Then the bolder play of youth
Trying new discovered powers,
Till he joins the strife of men,
Burning with an eager passion
For the high rewards of life.—
To present in greater beauty
What his inner eye beholds,
This is all his highest purpose
That has guided his career.

Cold and scornful does the world
Pile the barriers to his striving.
Is he near his final goal,
Comes a thund'rous "Halt!" to meet him.

"Make the barrier a stepping,
Ever higher keep your path."
Thus he presses on and urges,
Never ceasing from his aim.—
What he ever sought of yore
With his spirit's deepeth longing,
Now he seeks in sweat of death,
Seeks—alas! and finds it never.
Though he grasps it clearer now,
Though it grows in living form,
He can never all achieve it,
Nor create it in his thought.
Then the final blow is sounded
From the hammer-stroke of Death,
Breaks the earthly frame asunder,
Seals the eye with final night.
But a mighty host of sounds
Greet him from the space of heaven
With the song he sought below:
Man redeemed,—the world transfigured.

DON JUAN. (*TONE POEM.*)

A score or more of lines from Lenau's poem of the same title stand as the subject of the music.

O magic realm, illimited, eternal,
Of gloried woman,—loveliness supernal!
Fain would I, in the storm of stressful bliss,
Expire upon the last one's lingering kiss!
Through every realm, O friend, would wing my flight,
Wherever Beauty blooms, kneel down to each,
And, if for one brief moment, win delight!

. . . . . .

I flee from surfeit and from rapture's cloy,
Keep fresh for Beauty service and employ,
Grieving the One, that All I may enjoy.

My lady's charm to-day hath breath of spring,
To-morrow may the air of dungeon bring.
When with the new love won I sweetly wander,
No bliss is ours upfurbish'd and regilded;
A different love has This to That one yonder,—
Not up from ruins be my temple builded.
Yea Love life is, and ever must be now,
Cannot be changed or turned in new direction;
It must expire—here find a resurrection;
And, if 'tis real, it nothing knows of rue!
Each Beauty in the world is sole, unique;
So must the love be that would Beauty seek!
So long as Youth lives on with pulse afire,
Out to the chase! To victories new aspire!

. . . . . .

It was a wond'rous lovely storm that drove me:
Now it is o'er; and calm all round, above me;
Sheer dead is every wish; all hopes o'ershrouded,—
It was perhaps a flash from heaven descended,
Whose deadly stroke left me with powers ended,
And all the world, so bright before, o'erclouded;
Yet perchance not! Exhausted is the fuel;
And on the hearth the cold is fiercely cruel.*

In the question of the composer's intent, of general plan and of concrete detail, it is well to see that the quotation from Lenau's poem is twice broken by lines of omission; that there are thus three principal divisions. It cannot be wise to follow a certain kind of interpretation† which is based upon the plot of Mozart's opera. The spirit of Strauss's music is

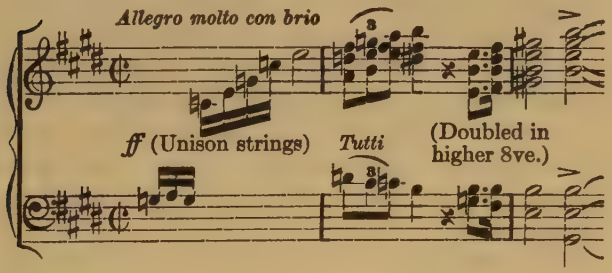
* Translation by John P. Jackson.

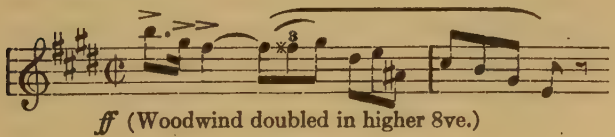
† In a complex commentary William Mauke finds Zerlina, Anna and "The Countess" in the music.

clearly a purely subjective conception, where the symbolic figure of fickle desire moves through scenes of enchantment to a climax of—barren despair.

To some extent Strauss clearly follows the separate parts of his quotation. Fervent desire, sudden indifference are not to be mistaken.

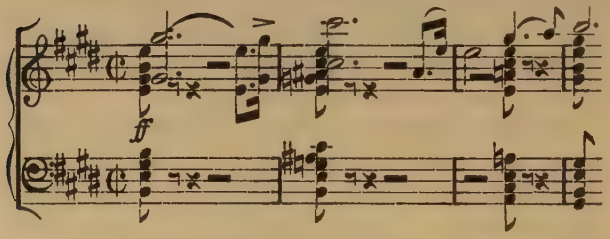
The various love scenes may be filled with special characters without great harm, save that the mind is diverted from a higher poetic view to a mere concrete play of events. The very quality of the pure musical treatment thus loses nobility and significance. Moreover the only thematic elements in the design are the various "motives" of the hero.

Allegro molto con brio begins the impetuous main theme in dashing ascent,

whimsical play



and masterful career.

(Doubled in higher 8ve.)



The various phases are mingled in spirited song; only the very beginning seems reserved as a special symbol of a turn in the chase, of the sudden flame of desire that is kindled anew.

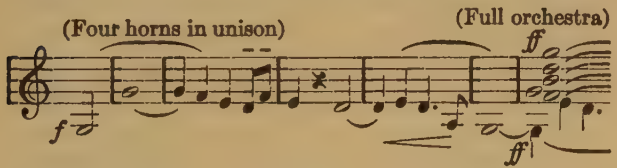
In the midst of a fresh burst of the main phrase are gentle strains of plaint (*flebile*). And now a tenderly sad motive in the wood sings against the marching phrase, amidst a spray of light, dancing chords. Another song of the main theme is spent in a vanishing tremolo of strings and harp, and buried in a rich chord whence rises a new song (*molto espressivo*) or rather a duet, the first of the longer love-passages.

The main melody is begun in clarinet and horn and instantly followed (as in canon) by violins. The climax of this impassioned scene is a titanic chord of minor, breaking the spell; the end is in a distorted strain of the melody, followed by a listless refrain of the (original) impetuous motive (*senza espressione*).

The main theme breaks forth anew, in the spirit

of the beginning. It yields suddenly before the next episode, a languorous song of lower strings (*molto appassionato*), strangely broken into by sighing phrases in the high wood (*flebile*). After further interruption, the love song is crowned by a broad flowing melody (*sehr getragen und ausdrucksvoll*)—the main lyric utterance of all. It has a full length of extended song, proportioned to its distinguished beauty. The dual quality is very clear throughout the scene. Much of the song is on a kindred phrase of the lyric melody sung by the clarinet with dulcet chain of chords of harp.

Here strikes a climatic tune in forte unison of the four horns (*molto espressivo e marcato*). It is the clear utterance of a new mood of the hero,—a purely



subjective phase. With a firm tread, though charged with pathos, it seems what we might venture to call a symbol of renunciation. It is broken in upon by a strange version of the great love song, *agitato* in oboes, losing all its queenly pace. As though in final answer comes again the ruthless phrase of horns, followed now by the original theme. *Rapidamente* in full force of strings comes the coursing strain of impetuous desire. The old and the new themes of the

hero are now in stirring encounter, and the latter seems to prevail.

The mood all turns to humor and merrymaking. In gay dancing trip serious subjects are treated jokingly (the great melody of the horns is mockingly sung by the harp),—in fits and gusts. At the height the (first) tempestuous motive once more dashes upwards and yields to a revel of the (second) whimsical phrase. A sense of fated renunciation seems to pervade the play of feelings of the hero. In the lull, when the paroxysm is spent, the various figures of his past romances pass in shadowy review; the first tearful strain, the melody of the first of the longer episodes,—the main lyric song (*agitato*).

In the last big flaming forth of the hero's passion victory is once more with the theme of renunciation,—or shall we say of grim denial where there is no choice.

Strauss does not defy tradition (or providence) by ending his poem with a triumph. A final elemental burst of passion stops abruptly before a long pause. The end is in dismal, dying harmonies,—a mere dull sigh of emptiness, a void of joy and even of the solace of poignant grief.

TILL EULENSPIEGEL'S MERRY PRANKS

In the Manner of Ancient Rogues—In Rondo Form

Hardly another subject could have been more happy for the revelling in brilliant pranks and conceits of a modern vein of composition. And in the

elusive humor of the subject is not the least charm and fitness. Too much stress has been laid on the graphic purpose. There is always a tendency to construe too literally. While we must be in full sympathy with the poetic story, there is small need to look for each precise event. We are tempted to go further, almost in defiance, and say that music need not be definite, even despite the composer's intent. In other words, if the tonal poet designs and has in mind a group of graphic figures, he may nevertheless achieve a work where the real value and beauty lie in a certain interlinear humor and poetry,—where the labels can in some degree be disregarded.

Indeed, it is this very abstract charm of music that finds in such a subject its fullest fitness. If we care to know the pranks exactly, why not turn to the text? Yet, reading the book, in a way, destroys the spell. Better imagine the ideal rogue, whimsical, spritely, all of the people too. But in the music is the real Till. The fine poetry of ancient humor is all there, distilled from the dregs of folk-lore that have to us lost their true essence. There is in the music a dæmonic quality, inherent in the subject, that somehow vanishes with the concrete tale. So we might say the tonal picture is a faithful likeness precisely in so far as it does not tell the facts of the story.

Indeed, in this mass of vulgar stories we cannot help wondering at the reason for their endurance through the centuries, until we feel something of the spirit of the people in all its phases. A true mirror

it was of stupidity and injustice, presented by a sprite of owlish wisdom, sporting, teasing and punishing * all about. It is a kind of popular satire, with a strong personal element of a human Puck, or an impish Robin Hood, with all the fairy restlessness, mocking at human rut and empty custom.

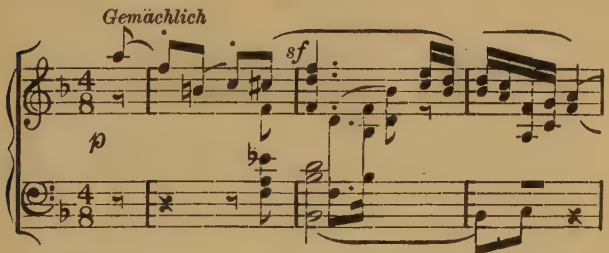
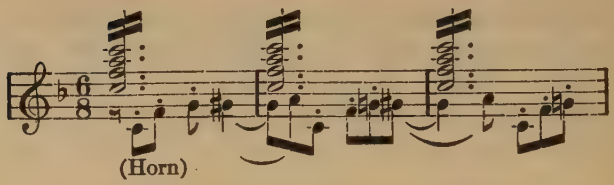
It is perhaps in the multitude of the stories, paradoxical though it seem, that lies the strength. In the number of them (ninety-two "histories" there are) is an element of universality. It is like the broom: one straw does not make, nor does the loss of one destroy it; somewhere in the mass lies the quality of broom.

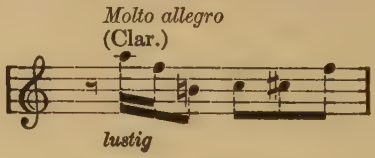
In a way Till is the Ulysses of German folk-lore, the hero of trickery, a kind of *Reinecke Fuchs* in real life. But he is of the soil as none of the others. A satyr, in a double sense, is Till; only he is pure Teuton, of the latter middle ages.

He is every sort of tradesman, from tailor to doctor. Many of the stories, perhaps the best, are not stories at all, but merely clever sayings. In most of the tricks there is a Roland for an Oliver. Till stops at no estate; parsons are his favorite victims. He is, on the whole, in favor with the people, though he played havoc with entire villages. Once he was

* On leaving the scene of some special mischief, Till would draw a chalk picture of an owl on the door, and write below, *Hic fuit*. The edition of 1519 has a woodcut of an owl resting on a mirror, that was carved in stone, the story goes, over Till's grave.

condemned to death by the Lübeck council. But even here it was his enemies, whom he had defrauded, that sought revenge. The others excused the tricks and applauded his escape. Even in death the scandal and mischief do not cease.

The directions in Strauss' music are new in their kind and dignity. They belong quite specially to this new vein of tonal painting. In a double function, they not merely guide the player, but the listener as well. The humor is of utmost essence; the humor is the thing, not the play, nor the story of each of the pranks, in turn, of our jolly rogue. And the humor lies much in these words of the composer, that give the lilt of motion and betray a sense of the intended meaning.

The tune, sung at the outset *gemächlich* (comfortably), is presumably the rogue *motif*, first in pure innocence of mood. But quickly comes another, quite opposed in rhythm, that soon hurries into highest speed. These are not the "subjects" of old tradition.

And first we are almost inclined to take the " Rondo form " as a new roguish prank. But we may find a form where the subjects are independent of the basic themes that weave in and out unfettered by rule—where the subjects are rather new grouping of the fundamental symbols.*

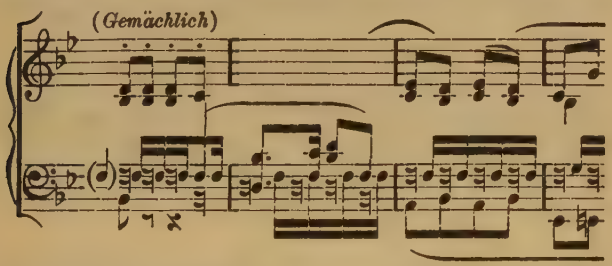
After a pause in the furious course of the second theme, a quick piping phrase sounds *lustig* (merrily) in the clarinet, answered by a chord of ominous

token. But slowly do we trace the laughing phrase to the first theme.

And here is a new whim. Though still in full tilt, the touch of demon is gone in a kind of ursine clog of the basses. Merely jaunty and clownish it would be but for the mischievous scream (of high flute) at the end. And now begins a rage of pranks, where

* It is like the Finale of Brahms' Fourth Symphony, where an older form (of *passacaglia*) is reared together with a later, one within the other.

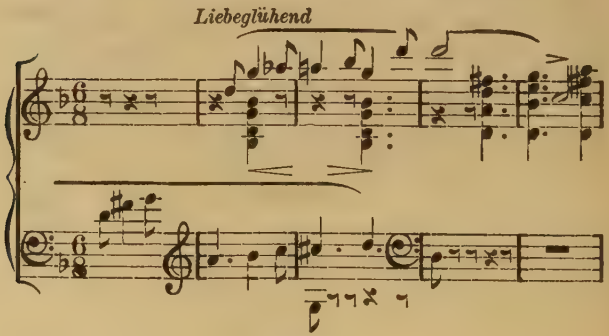
the main phrase is the rogue's laugh, rising in brilliant gamut of outer pitch and inner mood.

At times the humor is in the spirit of a Jean Paul, playing between rough fun and sadness in a fine spectrum of moods. The lighter motive dances harmlessly about the more serious, intimate second phrase. There is almost the sense of lullaby before the sudden plunge to wildest chaos, the only portent being a constant trembling of low strings. All Bedlam is let loose, where the rogue's shriek is heard through a confused cackling and a medley of voices here and there on the running phrase (that ever ends the second theme). The sound of a big rattle is added to the scene,—where perhaps the whole village is in an uproar over some wholesale trick of the rogue.

And what are we to say to this simplest swing of folk-song that steals in naïvely to enchanting strum of rhythm. We may speculate about the Till as the

people saw him, while elsewhere we have the personal view. The folk-tunes may not have a special dramatic rôle. Out of the text of folk-song, to be sure,

all the strains are woven. Here and there we have the collective voice. If we have watched keenly, we have heard how the tune, simply though it begins, has later all the line of Till's personal phrase. Even in the bass it is, too. Of the same fibre is this demon mockery and the thread of folk legend.

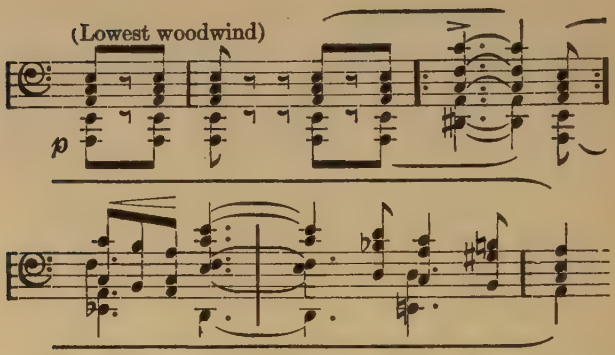
We cannot pretend to follow all the literal whims. And it is part of the very design that we are ever surprised by new tricks, as by this saucy trip of dancing phrase. The purely human touches are clear, and almost moving in contrast with the impish humor.

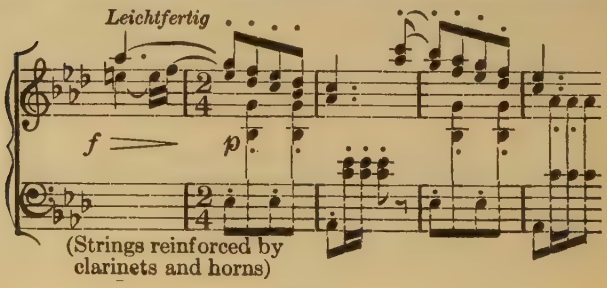
An earlier puzzle is of the second theme. As the composer has refused to help us, he will not quarrel if we find our own construction. A possible clue there is. As the story proceeds, aside from the mere abounding fun and poetry, the more serious theme prevails. Things are happening. And there come the tell-tale directions. *Liebeglühend,* aflame with love, a melody now sings in urgent pace, ending with

a strange descending note. Presently in quieter mood, *ruhiger,* it gains a new grace, merely to dash again, *wütend,* into a fiercer rage than before. Before long we cannot escape in all this newer melody a mere slower outline of the second theme. A guess then, such as the composer invites us to make, is this: It is not exactly a Jekyll and Hyde, but not altogether different. Here (in the second theme, of horn) is Till himself,—not the rogue, but the man in his likes and loves and suffering. The rogue is another, a demon that possesses him to tease mankind, to tease himself out of his happiness. During the passionate episode the rogue is banned, save for a grimace now and then, until the climax, when all in disguise of long passionate notes of resonant bass the demon theme has full control. But for once it is in earnest, in dead earnest, we might say. And the ominous chord has a supreme moment, in the shadow of the fulfilment.

A new note sounds in solemn legend of lowest wood, sadly beautiful, with a touch of funeral pace.*

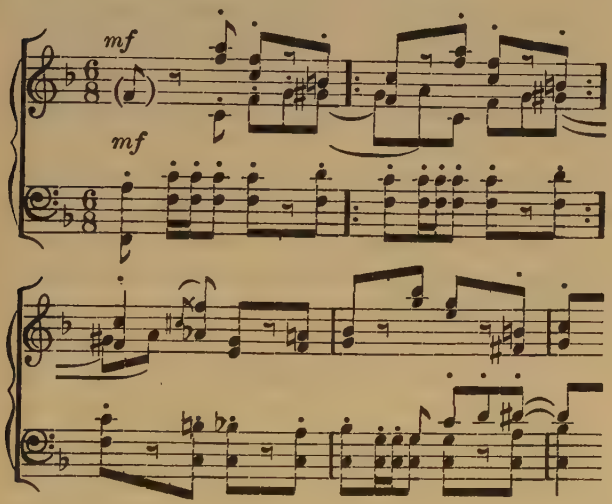
The impish laugh still keeps intruding. But throughout the scene it is the Till motive, not the rogue, that fits the stride of the death-march. To be sure the rogue anon laughs bravely. But the other figure is in full view.

* Strauss told the writer that this was the march of the jurymen,—"*der Marsch der Schöffen.*" Reproached for killing Till, he admitted that he had taken a license with the story and added: "In the epilogue,—there he lives."



The sombre legend is, indeed, in a separate phase, its beauty now distorted in a feverish chase of voices on the main phrase. It is all a second climax, of a certain note of terror,—of fate. In the midst is a dash of the rogue's heartiest laugh, amid the echoes of the fearful chord, while the growing roar of the mob can be heard below. Once again it rings out undaunted, and then to the sauciest of folk-tunes, *leichtfertig,* Till dances gaily and jauntily. Presently, in a mystic passage, *schnell und schattenhaft*

(like fleeting shadow) a phantom of the rogue's figure passes stealthily across the horizon.

Etwas gemächlicher, a graceful duet weaves prettily out of the Till motive, while the other roars very gently in chastened tones of softest horns.



The first course of themes now all recurs, though some of the roguery is softened and soon trips into purest folk-dance. And yet it is all built of the rascal theme. It might (for another idle guess) be a general rejoicing. Besides the tuneful dance, the personal phrase is laughing and chuckling in between.

The rejoicing has a big climax in the first folk-song of all, that now returns in full blast of horns against a united dance of strings and wood. After a roll of

drum loud clanging strokes sound threatening (*drohend*) in low bass and strings, to which the rascal pipes his theme indifferently (*gleichgültig*). The third time, his answer has a simulated sound (*entstellt*). Finally, on the insistent thud comes a piteous phrase (*kläglich*) in running thirds. The dread chords at last vanish, in the strings. It is very like an actual, physical end. There is no doubt that the composer here intends the death of Till, in face of the tradition.

Follows the epilogue, where in the comfortable swing of the beginning the first melody is extended in full beauty and significance. All the pleasantry of the rogue is here, and at the end a last fierce burst of the demon laugh.

"*SINFONIA DOMESTICA.*"

The work followed a series of tone-poems where the graphic aim is shown far beyond the dreams even of a Berlioz. It may be said that Strauss, strong evidence to the contrary, does not mean more than a suggestion of the mood,—that he plays in the humor and poetry of his subject rather than depicts the full story. It is certainly better to hold to this view as long as possible. The frightening penalty of the game of exact meanings is that if there is one here, there must be another there and everywhere. There is no blinking the signs of some sort of plot in our domestic symphony, with figures and situations. The best

group of notes makes hideous waste in one case, and a true tonal logic in another. Again, what was impossible in Mozart's time, may be commonplace to-day.

You cannot stamp cacophony as a mere whim of modern decadence. Beethoven made the noblest use of it and suffered misunderstanding. Bach has it in his scores with profound effect. And then the license of one age begets a greater in the next. It is so in poetry, though in far less degree. For, in music, the actual tones are the integral elements of the art. They are the idea itself; in poetry the words merely suggest it.

A final element, independent of the notes themselves, is the official numbering of themes. Strauss indicates a first, second and third theme, obviously of the symphony, not of a single movement. The whole attitude of the composer, while it does not compel, must strongly suggest some sort of guess of intending meaning.*

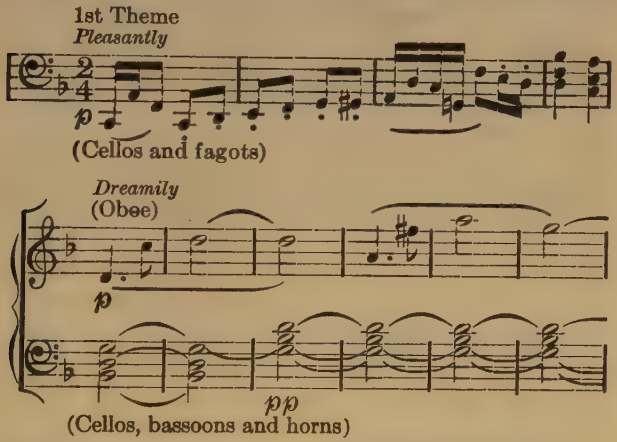
* At the first production, in New York, in obedience to the composer's wish, no descriptive notes were printed. When the symphony was played, likewise under the composer's direction, in Berlin in December, 1904, a brief note in the program-book mentions the three groups of themes, the husband's, the wife's and the child's, in the first movement. The other movements are thus entitled:

II.—*Scherzo.* Parents' happiness. Childish play. Cradle-song (the clock strikes seven in the evening).

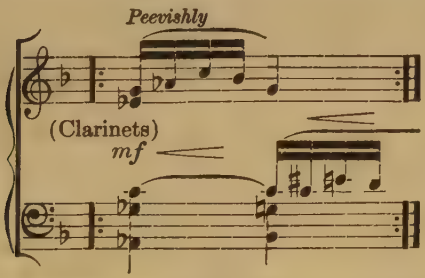
III.—*Adagio.* Creation and contemplation. Love scene. Dreams and cares (the clock strikes seven in the morning).

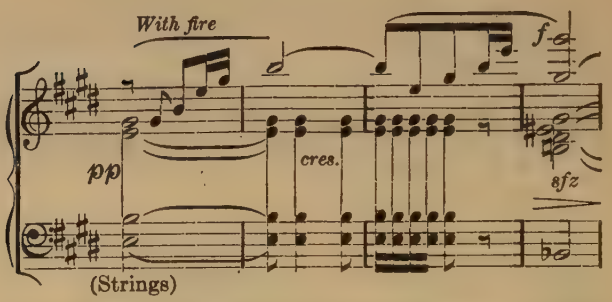
IV.—*Finale.* Awakening and merry dispute (double fugue). Joyous conclusion.

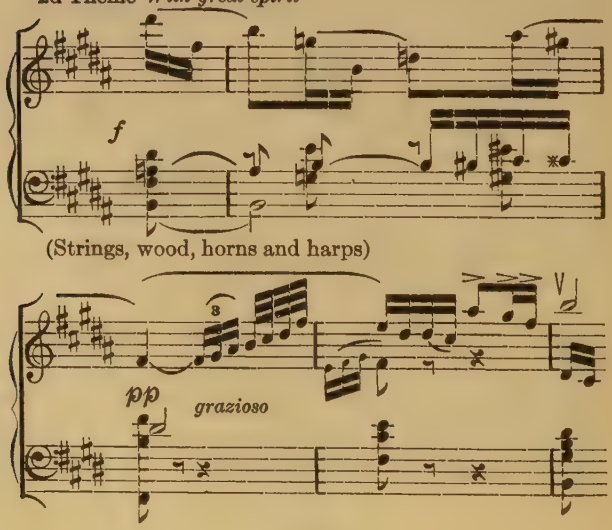
The "first theme" in "comfortable" pace, gliding



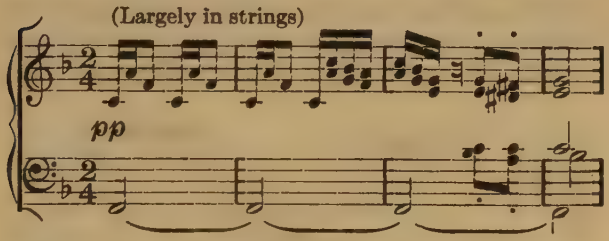
into a "dreamy" phrase, begins the symphony. Pres-



ently a "peevish" cry breaks in, in sudden altered key; then on a second, soothing tonal change, a strain sings "ardently" in upward wing to a bold climax and down to gentler cadence, the "peevish" cry still breaking in. The trumpet has a short cheery

call (*lustig*), followed by a brisk, rousing run in wood and strings (*frisch*). A return of the "comfortable" phrase is quickly overpowered by the "second theme," in very lively manner (*sehr lebhaft*), with an answering phrase, *grazioso,* and light trills above.

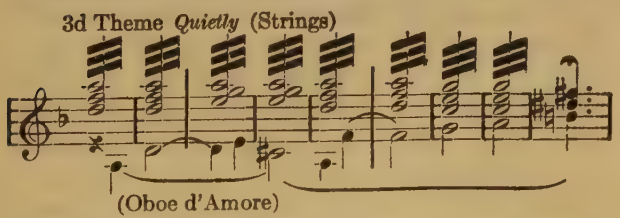


The incidental phrases are thus opposed to the main humor of each theme. The serene first melody has "peevish" interruptions; the assertive second yields to graceful blandishments. A little later a strain appears *gefühlvoll,* "full of feeling," (that plays a frequent part), but the main (second) theme breaks in "angrily." Soon a storm is brewing; at the height the same motive is sung insistently. In the lull, the first phrase of all sings gaily (*lustig*), and then serenely (*gemächlich*) in tuneful tenor. Various



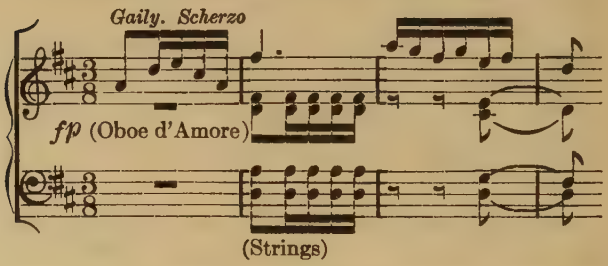
parts of the first theme are now blended in mutual discourse.

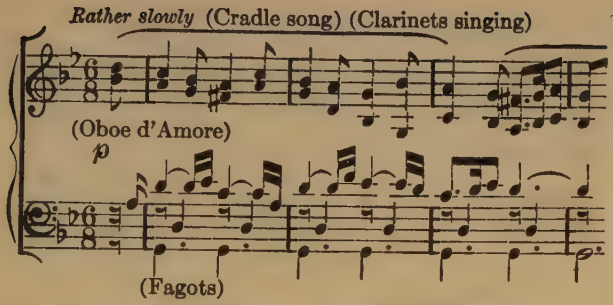
Amidst trembling strings the oboe d'amore plays the "third theme." "Very tenderly," "quietly," the



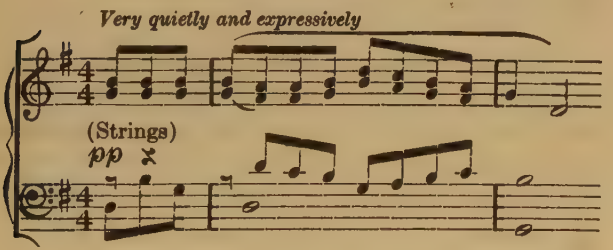
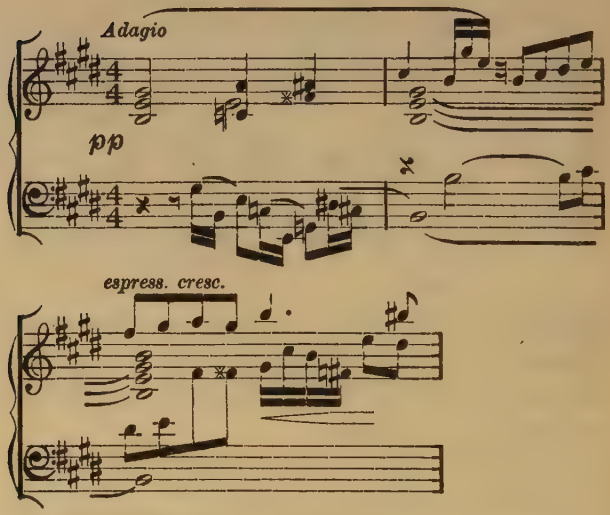
second gives soothing answer, and the third sings a full melodious verse.

Here a loud jangling noise tokens important arrivals. Fierce, hearty pulling of the door-bell excites the parents, especially the mother, who is quite in hysterics. The father takes it decidedly more calmly. The visitors presently appear in full view, so to speak; for "the aunts," in the trumpets, exclaim: "Just like Papa," and the uncles, in the trombones, cry: "Just like Mama" (*ganz die Mama*). There can be no questioning; it is all written in the book.

It is at least not hazardous to guess the three figures in the domestic symphony. Now in jolly Scherzo (*munter*) begin the tricks and sport of babyhood. There is of course but one theme, with mere com-

ments of parental phrases in varying accents of affection. Another noisy scene mars all the peace; father and child have a strong disagreement; the latter is "defiant"; the paternal authority is enforced. Bed-time comes with the stroke of seven, a cradle-song (Wiegenlied) (where the child's theme hums faintly below). Then, "slowly and very quietly" sings the "dreamy" phrase of the first theme, where



the answer, in sweeping descent, gives one of the principal elements of the later plot. It ends in a moving bit of tune, "very quietly and expressively" (*sehr ruhig und innig*).

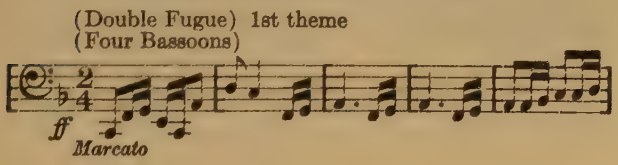
Adagio, a slow rising strain plays in the softer

wood-notes of flute, oboe d'amore, English horn, and the lower clarinets; below sings gently the second theme, quite transformed in feeling. Those upper notes, with a touch of impassioned yearning, are not new to our ears. That very rising phrase (the "dreamy" motive), if we strain our memory, was at first below the more vehement (second) figure. So

now the whole themal group is reversed outwardly and in the inner feeling. Indeed, in other places crops out a like expressive symbol, and especially in the phrase, marked *gefühlvoll,* that followed the second theme in the beginning. All these motives here find a big concerted song in quiet motion, the true lyric spot of the symphony.

Out of it emerges a full climax, bigger and broader now, of the first motive. At another stage the second has the lead; but at the height is a splendid verse of the maternal song. At the end the quiet, blissful tune sings again *"sehr innig."*

Appassionato re-enters the second figure. Mingled

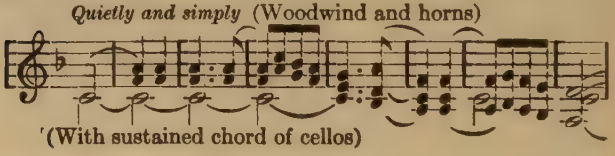
in its song are the latest tune and an earlier expressive phrase (*gefühlvoll*). The storm that here ensues is not of dramatic play of opposition. There are no "angry" indications. It is the full blossoming in richest madrigal of all the themes of tenderness and passion in an aureole of glowing harmonies. The morning comes with the stroke of seven and the awakening cry of the child.

The Finale begins in lively pace (*sehr lebhaft*) with



a double fugue, where it is not difficult to see in the first theme a fragment of the "baby" motive. The second is a remarkably assertive little phrase from the cadence of the second theme (quoted above). The son is clearly the hero, mainly in sportive humor, although he is not free from parental interference. The maze and rigor of the fugue do not prevent a frequent appearance of all the other themes, and even of the full melodies, of which the fugal motives are built. At the climax of the fugue, in the height of speed and noise, something very delightful is happening, some furious romp, perhaps, of father and son, the mother smiling on the game. At the close a new melody that we might trace, if we cared, in earlier

origin, has a full verse "quietly and simply" (*ruhig und einfach*) in wood and horns, giving the crown



and seal to the whole. The rest is a final happy refrain of all the strains, where the husband's themes are clearly dominant.

CHAPTER XIX

ITALIAN SYMPHONIES

THE present estate of music in Italy is an instance of the danger of prophecy in the broad realm of art. Wise words are daily heard on the rise and fall of a nation in art, or of a form like the symphony, as though a matter of certain fate, in strict analogy to the life of man.

Italy was so long regnant in music that she seems even yet its chosen land. We have quite forgotten how she herself learned at the feet of the masters from the distant North. For music is, after all, the art of the North; the solace for winter's desolation; an utterance of feeling without the model of a visible Nature.

And yet, with a prodigal stream of native melody and an ancient passion of religious rapture, Italy achieved masterpieces in the opposite fields of the Mass and of Opera. But for the more abstract plane of pure tonal forms it has somehow been supposed that she had neither a power nor a desire for expression. An Italian symphony seems almost an anomaly, —as strange a product as was once a German opera.

The blunt truth of actual events is that to-day a renascence has begun, not merely in melodic and dramatic lines; there is a new blending of the racial

gift of song with a power of profound design.* Despite all historical philosophy, here is a new gushing forth from ancient fount, of which the world may rejoice and be refreshed.

In a SYMPHONY BY GIOVANNI SGAMBATI,† IN D MAJOR, the form flows with such unpremeditated ease that it seems all to the manner born. It may be a new evidence that to-day national lines, at least in art, are vanishing; before long the national quality will be imperceptible and indeed irrelevant.

To be sure we see here an Italian touch in the simple artless stream of tune, the warm resonance, the buoyant spring of rhythm. The first movement stands out in the symphony with a subtler design than all the rest, though it does not lack the ringing note of jubilation.

The Andante is a pure lyric somewhat new in design and in feeling. It shows, too, an interesting contrast of opposite kinds of slower melody,—the one dark-hued and legend-like, from which the poet wings his flight to a hymnal rhapsody on a clear choral

* In the field of the *Lied* the later group of Italians, such as Sinigaglia and Bossi, show a melodic spontaneity and a breadth of lyric treatment that we miss in the songs of modern French composers.

In his Overture "*Le Baruffe Chiozzote*" (The Disputes of the People of Chiozza) Sinigaglia has woven a charming piece with lightest touch of masterly art; a delicate humor of melody plays amid a wealth of counterpoint that is all free of a sense of learning.

† Born in 1843.

theme, with a rich setting of arpeggic harmonies. A strange halting or limping rhythm is continued throughout the former subject. In the big climax the feeling is strong of some great chant or rite, of vespers or Magnificat. Against convention the ending returns to the mood of sad legend.

The Scherzo is a sparkling chain of dancing tunes of which the third, of more intimate hue, somehow harks back to the second theme of the first movement.

A Trio, a dulcet, tender song of the wood, precedes the return of the Scherzo that ends with the speaking cadence from the first Allegro.

A Serenata must be regarded as a kind of Intermezzo, in the Cantilena manner, with an accompanying rhythm suggesting an ancient Spanish dance. It stands as a foil between the gaiety of the Scherzo and the jubilation of the Finale.

The Finale is one festive idyll, full of ringing tune and almost bucolic lilt of dance. It reaches one of those happy jingles that we are glad to hear the composer singing to his heart's content.

*GIUSEPPE MARTUCCI. SYMPHONY IN D MINOR.**

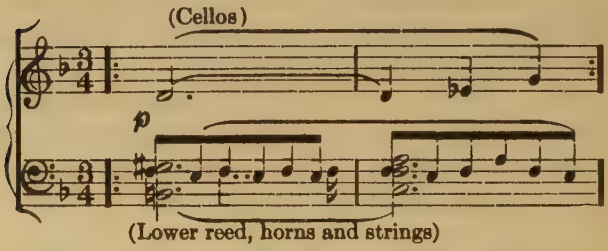
The very naturalness, the limpid flow of the melodic thought seem to resist analysis of the design. The listener's perception must be as naïve and spontaneous as was the original conception.

There is, on the one hand, no mere adoption of a

* Giuseppe Martucci, 1856–1911.

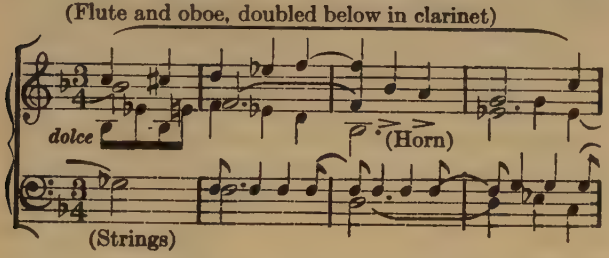
classical schedule of form, nor, on the other, the over-subtle workmanship of modern schools. Fresh and resolute begins the virile theme with a main charm in the motion itself. It lies not in a tune here or there, but in a dual play of responsive phrases at the start, and then a continuous flow of further melody on the fillip of the original rhythm, indefinable of outline in a joyous chanting of bass and treble.

A first height reached, an expressive line in the following lull rises in the cellos, that is the essence of the contrasting idea, followed straightway by a brief phrase of the kind, like some turns of peasant song, that we can hear contentedly without ceasing.

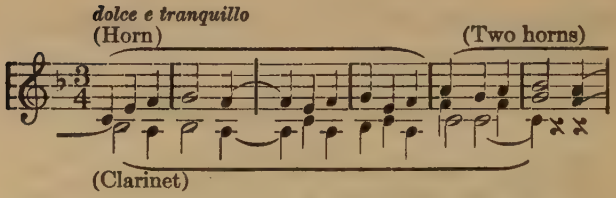


Again, as at the beginning, such a wealth of melodies sing together that not even the composer could know which he intended in chief. We merely feel, instead of the incisive ring of the first group, a quieter power of soothing beauty. Yet, heralded by a prelude of sweet strains, the expressive line now enters like a queenly figure over a new rhythmic motion, and

flows on through delighting glimpses of new harmony to a striking climax.



The story, now that the characters have appeared, continues in the main with the second browsing in soft lower strings, while the first (in its later phase) sings above in the wood transformed in mildness, though for a nonce the first motive strikes with decisive vigor. Later is a new heroic mood of minor, quickly softened when the companion melody appears. A chapter of more sombre hue follows, all with the lilt and pace of romantic ballad. At last the main hero returns as at the beginning, only in more splendid panoply, and rides on 'mid clattering suite to passionate triumph. And then, with quieter charm, sings again the second figure, with the delighting strains again and again rehearsed, matching the other with the power of sweetness.

One special idyll there is of carolling soft horn and clarinet, where a kind of lullaby flows like a distilled essence from the gentler play—of the heroic tune, before its last big verse, with a mighty flow of

sequence, and splendidly here the second figure crowns the pageant. At the passionate height, over long ringing chord, the latter sings a sonorous line in lengthened notes of the wood and horns. The first climax is here, in big coursing strains, then it slowly lulls, with a new verse of the idyll, to a final hush.

The second movement is a brief lyric with one main melody, sung at first by a solo cello amidst a weaving of muted strings; later it is taken up by the first violins. The solo cello returns for a further song in duet with the violins, where the violas, too, entwine their melody, or the cello is joined by the violins.

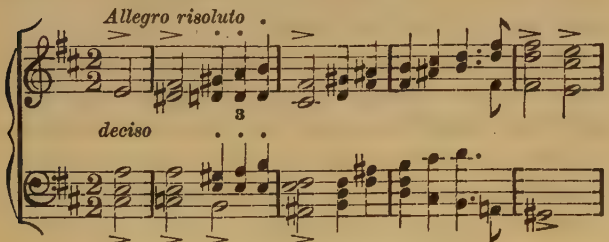
Now the chief melody returns for a richer and varied setting with horns and woodwind. At last the first violins, paired in octave with the cello, sing the full melody in a madrigal of lesser strains.

An epilogue answers the prologue of the beginning.

Equally brief is the true Scherzo, though merely entitled Allegretto,—a dainty frolic without the heavy brass, an indefinable conceit of airy fantasy, with here and there a line of sober melody peeping between the mischievous pranks. There is no contrasting Trio in the middle; but just before the end comes a

quiet pace as of mock-gravity, before a final scamper.

A preluding fantasy begins in the mood of the early Allegro; a wistful melody of the clarinet plays more slowly between cryptic reminders of the first theme of the symphony. In sudden *Allegro risoluto* over rumbling bass of strings, a mystic call of horns, harking far back, spreads its echoing ripples all about till it rises in united tones, with a clear, descending answer, much like the original first motive. The latter now continues in the bass in large and smaller pace beneath a new tuneful treble of violins, while the call still roams a free course in the wind. Oft repeated is this resonation in paired harmonies, the lower phrase like an "obstinate bass."

Leaving the fantasy, the voices sing in simple choral lines a hymnal song in triumphal pace, with firm cadence and answer, ending at length in the descend-

(Strings, with added wood and horns)

ing phrase. The full song is repeated, from the entrance of the latter, as though to stress the two main melodies. The marching chorus halts briefly

when the clarinet begins again a mystic verse on the strain of the call, where the descending phrase is intermingled in the horns and strings.

There is a new horizon here. We can no longer speak with half-condescension of Italian simplicity, though another kind of primal feeling is mingled in a breadth of symphonic vein. We feel that our Italian poet has cast loose his leading strings and is revealing new glimpses through the classic form.

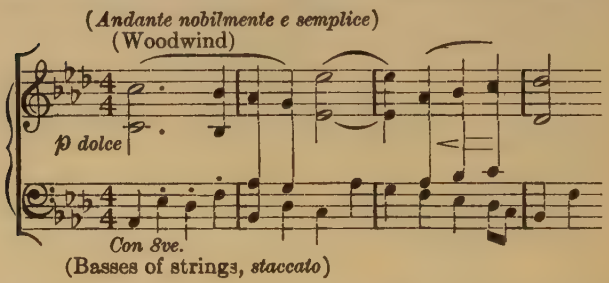
Against a free course of quicker figures rises in the horns the simple melodic call, with answer and counter-tunes in separate discussion. Here comes storming in a strident line of the inverted melody in the bassoon, quarrelling with the original motive in the clarinet. Then a group sing the song in dancing trip, descending against the stern rising theme of violas; or one choir follows on the heels of another. Now into the play intrudes the second melody, likewise in serried chase of imitation.

The two themes seem to be battling for dominance, and the former wins, shouting its primal tune in brass and wood, while the second sinks to a rude clattering rhythm in the bass. But out of the clash, where the descending phrase recurs in the basses, the second melody emerges in full sonorous song. Suddenly at the top of the verse rings out in stentorian brass the first theme of all the symphony to the opening chord of the Finale, just as it rang at the climax in the beginning.

A gentle duet of violins and clarinet seems to bring back the second melody of the first movement, and somehow, in the softer mood, shows a likeness with the second of the Finale. For a last surprise, the former idyll (of the first Allegro) returns and clearly proves the original guise of our latest main melody. As though to assure its own identity as prevailing motto, it has a special celebration in the final joyous revel.

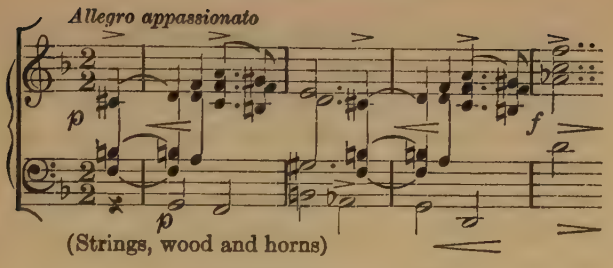
CHAPTER XX

EDWARD ELGAR. AN ENGLISH SYMPHONY*

THERE is a rare nobility in the simple melody, the vein of primal hymn, that marks the invocation,—in solemn wood against stately stride of

lower strings. A true ancient charm is in the tune, with a fervor at the high point and a lilt almost of lullaby,—till the whole chorus begins anew as though the song of marching hosts. Solemnity is the essence here, not of artificial ceremony nor of rhymeless chant, —rather of prehistoric hymn.

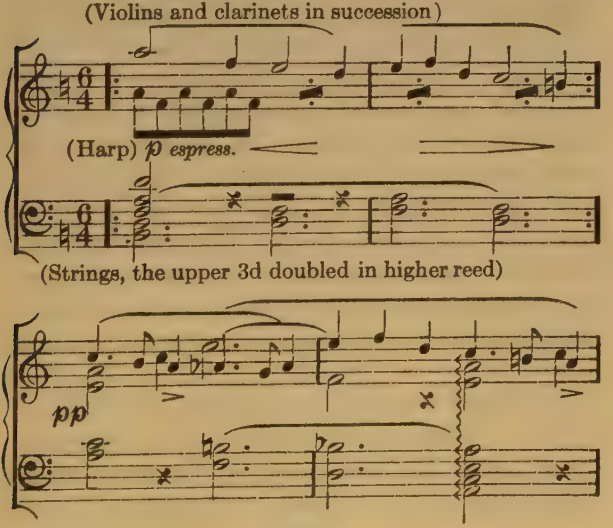
In passionate recoil is the upward storming song (Allegro) where a group of horns aid the surging crest of strings and wood,—a resistless motion of massed melody. Most thrilling after the first climax is the sonorous, vibrant stroke of the bass in the

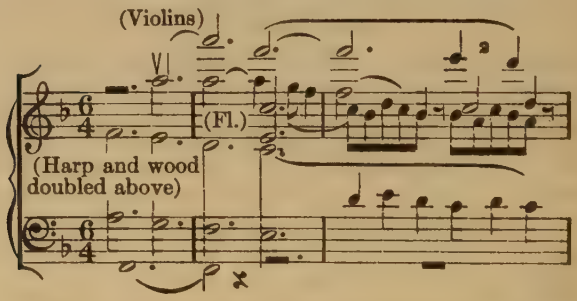
* Symphony in A flat. Edward Elgar, born in 1857.



(See page 308, line 10.)

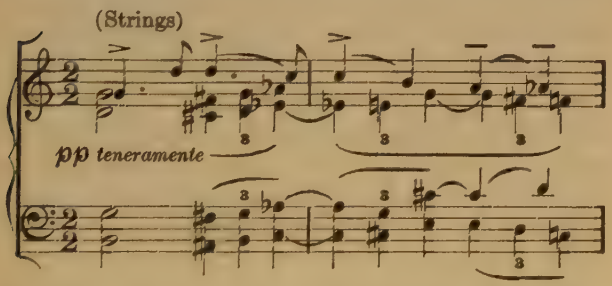
recurring melody. As it proceeds, a new line of bold tune is stirred above, till the song ends at the highest in a few ringing, challenging leaps of chord,—ends or, rather merges in a relentless, concluding descent. Here, in a striking phrase of double



song, is a touch of plaint that, hushing, heralds the coming gentle figure. We are sunk in a sweet romance, still of ancientest lore, with a sense of lost bliss in the wistful cadence. Or do these entrancing strains lead merely to the broader melody that moves with queenly tread (of descending violins) above a soft murmuring of lower figures? It is taken up

in a lower voice and rises to a height of inner throb rather than of outer stress. The song departs as it came, through the tearful plaint of double phrase. Bolder accents merge suddenly into the former impassioned song. Here is the real sting of warrior call, with shaking brass and rolling drum, in lengthened swing against other faster sounds,—a revel of heroics, that at the end breaks afresh into the regular song.

Yet it is all more than mere battle-music. For here is a new passionate vehemence, with loudest force of vibrant brass, of those dulcet strains that preceded the queenly melody. An epic it is, at the least, of

ancient flavor, and the sweeter romance here rises to a tempest more overpowering than martial tumult.

It is in the harking back to primal lore that we seem to feel true passion at its best and purest, as somehow all truth of legend, proverb and fable has come from those misty ages of the earth. The drooping harmonies merge in the returning swing of the first solemn hymn,—a mere line that is broken by a new tender appeal, that, rising to a moving height,

yields to the former plaint (of throbbing thirds).

A longer elegy sings, with a fine poignancy, bold and new in the very delicacy of texture, in the sharp impinging of these gentlest sounds. In the depths of the dirge suddenly, though quietly, sounds the herald melody high in the wood, with ever firmer cheer, soon in golden horns, at last in impassioned strings, followed by the wistful motive.

A phase here begins as of dull foreboding, with a new figure stalking in the depths and, above, a brief sigh in the wind. In the growing stress these figures

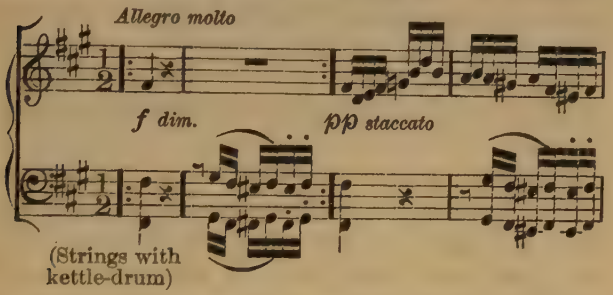
sing from opposite quarters, the sobbing phrase below, when suddenly the queenly melody stills the tumult. It is answered by a dim, slow line of the ominous motive. Quicker echoes of the earlier despond still flit here and there, with gleams of joyous light. The plaintive (dual) song returns and too the tender appeal, which with its sweetness at last wakens the buoyant spirit of the virile theme.

And so pass again the earlier phases of resolution with the masterful conclusion; the tearful accents; the brief verse of romance, and the sweep of queenly figure, rising again to almost exultation. But here, instead of tears and recoil, is the brief sigh over sombre harmonies, rising insistent in growing volume that somehow conquers its own mood. A return of the virile motive is followed at the height by the throbbing dual song with vehement stress of grief, falling to lowest echoes.

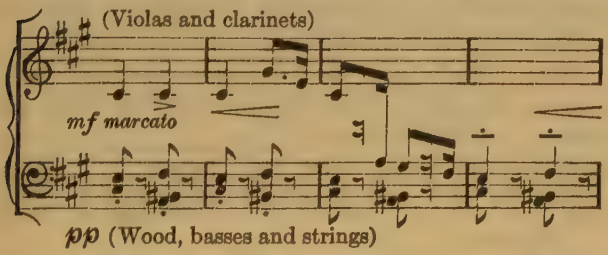
Here begins the epilogue with the original solemn hymn. Only it is now entwined with shreds and memories of romance, flowing tranquilly on through gusts of passion. And there is the dull sob with the sudden gleam of joyous light. But the hymn returns like a sombre solace of oblivion,—though there is a final strain of the wistful romance, ending in sad harmony.

II.—Allegro molto. The Scherzo (as we may venture to call it) begins with a breath of new harmony, or is it a blended magic of rhythm, tune and chord? Far more than merely bizarre, it calls

up a vision of Celtic warriors, the wild, free spirit of Northern races. The rushing jig or reel is halted



anon by longer notes in a drop of the tune and instantly returns to the quicker run. Below plays a kind of drum-roll of rumbling strings. Other revelling pranks appear, of skipping wood, rushing harp and dancing strings, till at last sounds a clearer tune, a restrained war-march with touch of terror in the soft subdued chords, suddenly growing to expressive



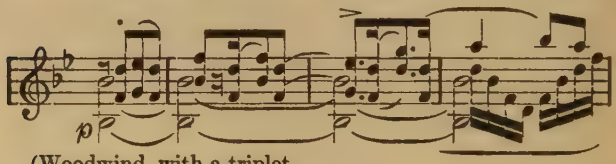
volume as it sounds all about, in treble and in bass.

At last the war-song rings in full triumphant blast, where trumpets and the shrill fife lead, and the lower brass, with cymbals and drums (big and little) mark

the march. Then to the returning pranks the tune roars in low basses and reeds, and at last a big conclusive phrase descends from the height to meet the rising figure of the basses.

Now the reel dances in furious tumult (instead of the first whisper) and dies down through the slower cadence.

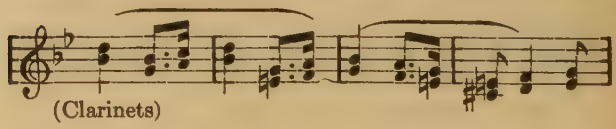
An entirely new scene is here. To a blended tinkle of harp, reeds and high strings sounds a delicate air, quick and light, yet with a tinge of plaint that may be a part of all Celtic song. It were rude to spoil



(Woodwind, with a triplet pulse of harp and rhythmic strings)

its fine fragrance with some rough title of meaning; nor do we feel a strong sense of romance, rather a whim of Northern fantasy.

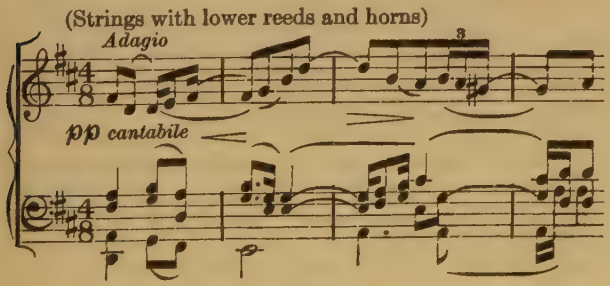
Over a single note of bass sings a new strain of elegy, taken up by other voices, varying with the



(Clarinets)

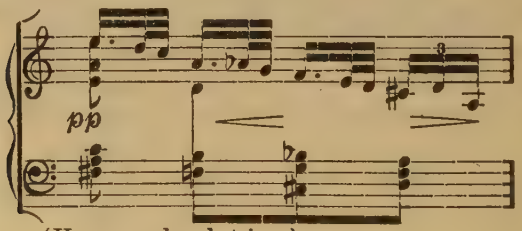
tinkling air. Suddenly in rushes the first reel, softly as at first; but over it sings still the new sad tune, then yields to the wild whims and pranks that lead to the war-song in resonant chorus, joined at the height

by the reel below. They change places, the tune ringing in the bass. In the martial tumult the tinkling air is likewise infected with saucy vigor, but suddenly retires abashed into its shell of fairy sound, and over it sings the elegy in various choirs. The tinkling melody falls suddenly into a new flow of moving song, rising to pure lyric fervor. The soft air has somehow the main say, has reached the high point, has touched the heart of the movement. Expressively it slowly sinks away amid echoing phrases and yields to the duet of elegy and the first reel. But a new spirit has appeared. The sting of war-song is gone. And here is the reel in slow reluctant pace. After another verse of the fairy tune, the jig plays still slower, while above sings a new melody. Still slower the jig has fallen almost to funeral pace, has grown to a new song of its own, though, to be sure, brief reminders of the first dance jingle softly here and there. And now the (hushed) shadow of the war-song in quite slower gait strides in lowest basses and passes quietly straight into the Adagio.



III.—Assured peace is in the simple sincere melody, rising to a glow of passion. But—is this a jest of our poet? Or rather now we see why there was no halt at the end of the Scherzo. For the soothing melody is in the very notes of the impish reel,—is the same tune.* Suddenly hushing, the song hangs on high over delicate minor harmonies.

In exquisite hues an intimate dialogue ensues, almost too personal for the epic vein, a discourse or madrigal of finest fibre that breaks (like rays of setting sun) into a melting cadence of regret. We are doubly thrilled in harking back to the sweet, wistful romance, the strain of the first movement.



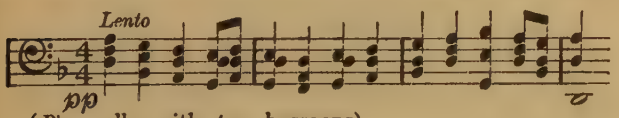
(Harp, wood and strings)

Across the gauzy play, horns and wood blow a slow phrase, like a motto of Fate in the sombre harmony, with one ardent burst of pleading.

* There seems to be shown in this feat at once the versatility of music as well as the musician in expressing opposite moods by the same theme. The author does not feel bound to trace all such analogies, as in the too close pursuit we may lose the forest in the jungle.

In clearer articulation sings a dual song, still softly o'ercast with sweet sadness, ever richer in the harmonies of multiple strings, tipped with the light mood,—and again the wistful cadence. Siren figures of entrancing grace that move amid the other melody, bring enchantment that has no cheer, nor escape the insistent sighing phrase. Once more come the ominous call and the passionate plea, then assurance with the returning main melody in renewed fervor. Phases of dual melody end again with the wistful cadence. The tranquil close is like one sustained fatal farewell, where the fairy figures but stress the sad burden.

IV.—The beginning is in lowest depths (Largo). First is the stalking figure of earliest movement, from the moment of despond. It is answered by a steadily striding theme, almost martial, save for the



(*Pizz.* cellos with *stacc.* bassoons)

slowness of pace. Not unlike the hymn of the first prologue in line of tune, it bears a mood of dark resignation that breaks presently into the touching plea of the wistful cadence.

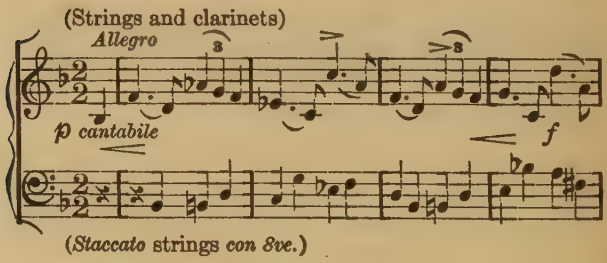
The whole is a reflective prologue to the Finale: a deep meditation from which the song may roll forth on new spring. The hymn has suddenly entered with a subtly new guise; for the moment it seems part

of the poignant sigh; it is as yet submerged in a flood of gloom and regret; and the former phrases still stride and stalk below. In a wild climax of gloom we hear the former sob, earlier companion of the stalking figure.

Hymnal strains return,—flashes of heavenly light in the depths of hell, and one passionate sigh of the melting cadence.

Allegro,—we are carried back to the resolute vigor of the earlier symphony, lacking the full fiery charm, but ever striving and stirring, like Titans rearing mountain piles, not without the cheer of toil itself. At the height comes a burst of the erst yearning cadence, but there is a new masterful accent; the wistful edge does not return till the echoing phrases sink away in the depths.

A new melody starts soaring on the same wing of



blended striving and yearning of which all this song is fraught. In its broader sweep and brighter cheer it is like the queenly melody of the first movement.

The Titan toil stirs strongly below the soft cadence;

the full, fierce ardor mounts heavenward. Phases now alternate of insistent rearing on the strenuous motive and of fateful submission in the marching strain, that is massed in higher and bigger chorus. As gathers the stress of climax, the brass blowing a defiant blast, the very vehemence brings a new resolution that is uttered in the returning strenuous phrase.

Again rises the towering pile. At the thickest the high horns blow loud a slow, speaking legend,—the farewell motive, it seems, from the end of Adagio, fierce energy struggling with fatal regret gnawing at the heart.

Gripping is the appeal of the sharp cry almost of anguish into which the toiling energy is suddenly resolved. Again the fateful march enters, now in heroic fugue of brass and opposite motion of strings and reed,—all overwhelmed with wild recurring pangs of regret.

And so "double, double, toil and trouble," on goes the fugue and follows the arduous climb (into the sad motto in the horns), each relieving the other, till both yield again to the heart-breaking cry.

The cheerier melody here re-enters and raises the mood for the nonce. Soon it falls amid dim harmonies. Far in the depths now growls the dull tread, answered by perverted line of the hymn.

A mystic verse sounds over pious chords of harp in the tune of the march, which is sung by antiphonal choirs of strings,—later with fuller celestial chorus,

almost in rapture of heavenly resignation. Only it is not final; for once again returns the full struggle of the beginning, with the farewell-legend, and in highest passion the phrase of regret rung again and again—till it is soothed by the tranquil melody. The relentless stride of march too reaches a new height, and one last, moving plaint. When the fast chasing cries are in closest tangle, suddenly the hymn pours out its benediction, while the cries have changed to angelic acclaim. Here is the transfigured song in full climactic verse that fulfils the promise of the beginning. A touch of human (or earthly joy) is added in an exultant strain of the sweeping melody that unites with the hymn at the close.

CHAPTER XXI

SYMPHONIES IN AMERICA

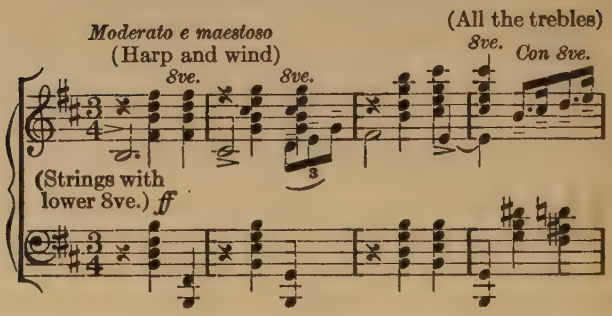
WHEN we come to a view of modern music in symphonic design, written in America, we are puzzled by a new phase of the element of nationalism. For here are schools and styles as different as of far corners of Europe. Yet they can be called nothing else than American, if they must have a national name. In the northern centre whence a model orchestra has long shed a beneficent influence far afield, the touch of new French conceits has colored some of the ablest works. Elsewhere we have cited a symphony more in line with classical tradition.*

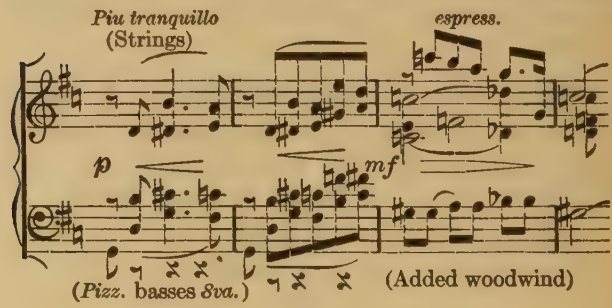
Perhaps most typical is a symphony of Hadley where one feels, with other modern tradition, the mantle of the lamented MacDowell, of whom it may be said that he was first to find in higher reaches of the musical art an utterance of a purely national temper.

HENRY HADLEY. SYMPHONY NO. 3, B. MINOR.†

With virile swing the majestic melody strides in the strings, attended by trooping chords of wood and brass, all in the minor, in triple rhythm. In

* A symphony by Wm. W. Gilchrist. Vol. II, Appendix.
† Opus 60, Henry Hadley, American, born 1871.



the bass is a frequent retort to the themal phrase. For a moment a dulcet line steals in, quickly broken by the returning martial stride of stentorian horns, and of the main theme in full chords. Strange, though, how a softer, romantic humor is soon spread over the very discussion of the martial theme, so that it seems the rough, vigorous march is but the shell for the kernel of tender romance,—the pageant that precedes the queenly figure. And presently, *piu tranquillo,* comes the fervent lyric song that may indeed be the chief theme in poetic import, if not in outer rank. After a moving verse in the strings,

with an expressive strain in some voice of the wood-wind or a ripple of the harp, it is sung in tense chorus of lower wood and horns,—soon joined by all the voices but the martial brass, ending with a soft echo of the strings.

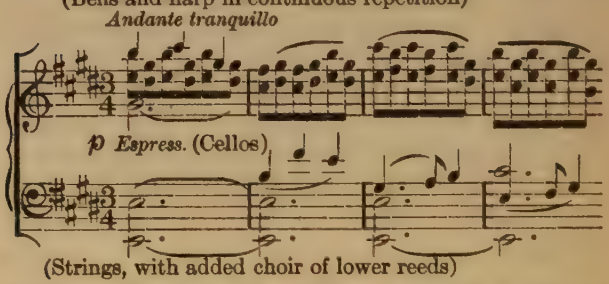
Now in full majesty the stern stride of first theme is resumed, in faster insistence,—no longer the mere tune, but a spirited extension and discussion, with retorts between the various choirs. Here the melodious march is suddenly felt in the bass (beneath our feet, as it were) of lowest brass and strings, while the noisy bustle continues above; then, changing places, the theme is above, the active motion below.

Long continues the spirited clatter as of war-like march till again returns the melting mood of the companion melody, now sung by the expressive horn, with murmuring strings. And there are enchanting flashes of tonal light as the song passes to higher choirs. The lyric theme wings its rapturous course to a blissful height, where an intrusion of the main motive but halts for the moment the returning tender verse.

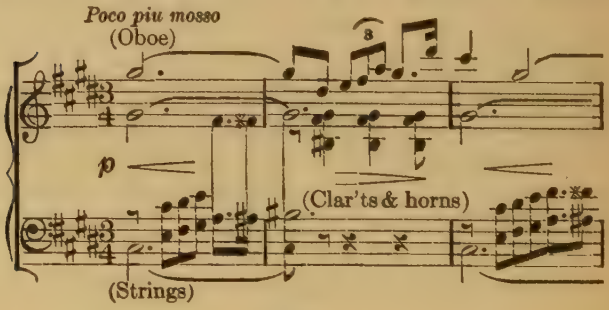
When the first vigorous phrase returns in full career, there is somehow a greater warmth, and the dulcet after-strain is transfigured in a glow greater almost than of the lyric song that now follows with no less response of beauty. In the final spirited blending of both melodies the trumpets sound a quicker pace of the main motive.

In the Andante (*tranquillo*) the sweet tinkle of

church-bells with soft chanting horns quickly defines the scene. Two voices of the strings, to the

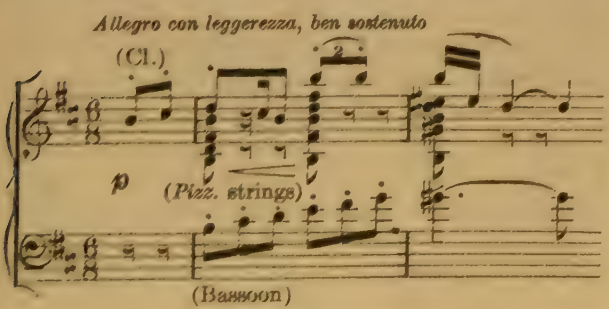


continuing hum of the bells, are singing a responsive song that rises in fervor as the horns and later the woodwind join the strings. Anon will sound the simple tune of the bells with soft harmonies, like echoes of the song,—or even the chant without the chimes.

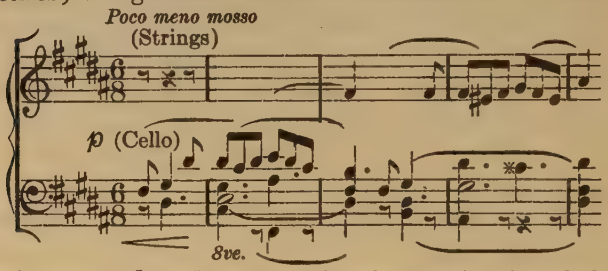
In more eager motion,—out of the normal measure of bells and hymn, breaks a new song in minor with a touch of passion, rising to a burst of ardor. But it passes, sinking away before a new phase,—a bucolic

fantasy of trilling shepherd's reed (in changed, even pace), supported by strumming strings. The sacred calm and later passion have yielded to a dolorous plaint, like the dirge of the Magyar plains. Suddenly the former fervor returns with strains of the second melody amidst urging motion (in the triple pace) and startling rushes of harp-strings. At the height, trumpets blare forth the first melody, transformed from its earlier softness, while the second presses on in higher wood and strings; the trombones relieve the trumpets, with a still larger chorus in the romantic song; in final exaltation, the basses of brass and strings sound the first melody, while the second still courses in treble voices.

Of a sudden, after a lull, falls again the tinkle of sacred chimes, with a verse each of the two main melodies.

The Scherzo begins with a Saltarello humor, as of airy faun, with a skipping theme ever accompanied by a lower running phrase and a prancing trip of

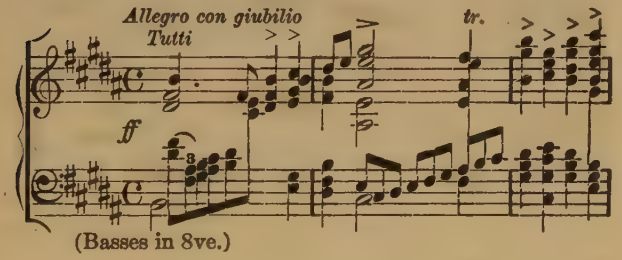


strings, with a refrain, too, of chirruping woodwind. Later the skipping phrase gains a melodic cadence. But the main mood is a revel of gambols and pranks of rhythm and harmony on the first phase.

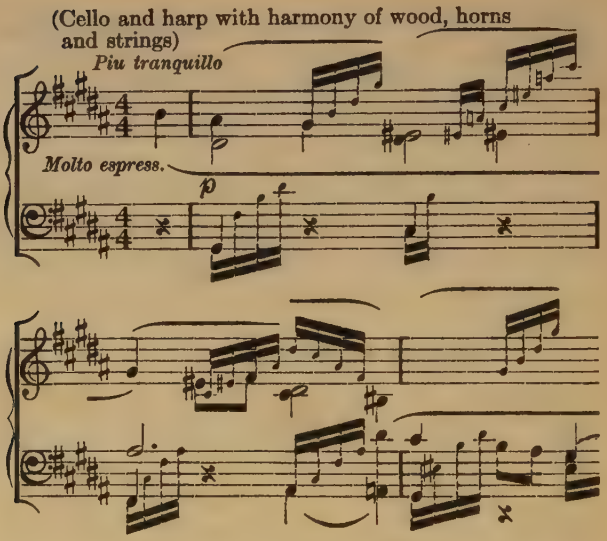
In the middle is a sudden shift of major tone and intimate humor, to a slower pace. With still a semblance of dance, a pensive melody sings in the cellos; the graceful cadence is rehearsed in a choir

of woodwind, and the song is taken up by the whole chorus. As a pretty counter-tune grows above, the melody sings below, with a blending of lyric feeling and the charm of dance. At a climactic height the horns, with clumsy grace, blare forth the main lilting phrase.

The song now wings along with quicker tripping counter-tunes that slowly lure the first skipping tune back into the play after a prelude of high festivity. New pranks appear,—as of dancing strings against a stride of loud, muted horns. Then the second (pensive) melody returns, now above the running counter-tune. At last, in faster gait, to the coursing of quicker figures, the (second) melody rings out in

choir of brass in twice slower, stately pace. But the accompanying bustle is merely heightened until all four horns are striking together the lyric song. At the end is a final revel of the first dancing tune.

The Finale, which bears the unusual mark *Allegro con giubilio,* begins with a big festive march that may seem to have an added flavor of old English merry-making. But as in the other cantos of the poem there

is here, too, an opposite figure and feeling. And the more joyous the gaiety, the more sweetly wistful is the recoil. Nay there is in this very expressive strain, beautifully woven in strings, harp, woodwind and horns, a vein of regret that grows rather than lessens, whenever the melody appears alone. It is like the memory, in the midst of festival, of some blissful moment lost forever.

Indeed, the next phase seems very like a disordered chase of stray memories; for here a line of martial air is displaced by a pensive strain which in



turn yields to the quick, active tune that leads to a height of celebration.

But here is a bewildering figure on the scene: Lustily the four horns (helped by the strings) blow in slow notes against the continuing motive an expressive melody. Slowly it breaks upon our ears as the wistful air that followed the chimes of Sunday bells. It has a stern, almost sombre guise, until it suddenly glows in transfigured light, as of a choir of celestial brass.

Slowly we are borne to the less exalted pitch of the first festive march, and here follows, as at first, the expressive melody where each hearer may find his

own shade of sadness. It does seem to reach a true passion of regret, with poignant sweet sighs.

At length the sadness is overcome and there is a new animation as separate voices enter in fugal manner in the line of the march. Now the festive tune holds sway in lower pace in the basses; but then rings on high in answer—the wistful melody again and again, in doubled and twice redoubled pace.

When we hear the *penseroso* melody once more at the end, we may feel with the poet a state of resigned cheer.

A remarkable work that shows the influence of modern French harmony rather than its actual traits, is a SYMPHONY BY GUSTAV STRUBE.* It is difficult to resist the sense of a strain for bizarre harmony, of a touch of preciosity. The real business of these harmonies is for incidental pranks, with an after-touch that confesses the jest, or softens it to a lyric utterance. It cannot be denied that the moving moments in this work come precisely in the release of the strain of dissonance, as in the returning melody of the Adagio. Only we may feel we have been waiting too long. The desert was perhaps too long for the oasis. *Est modus in rebus:* the poet seems niggardly with his melody; he may weary us with too long waiting, with too little staying comfort. He does not escape the modern way of symbolic, infinitesimal

* Of Boston,—born in Germany in 1867.

melody, so small that it must, of course, reappear. It is a little like the wonderful arguments from ciphers hidden in poetry.

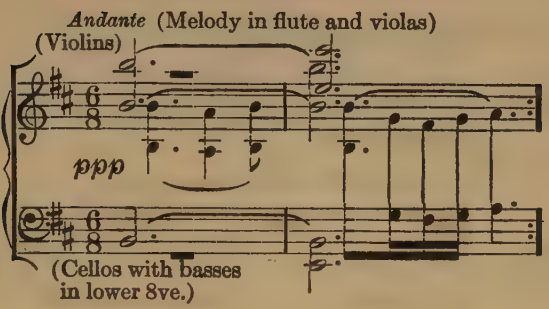
It cannot be denied that the smallness of phrase does suggest a smallness of idea. The plan of magic motive will not hold *ad infinitesimum*. As the turn of the triplet, in the first movement, twists into a semblance of the Allegro theme, we feel like wondering with the old Philistine:

> . . . "How all this difference can be
> 'Twixt tweedle-dum and tweedle-dee!"

But there is the redeeming vein of lyric melody with a bold fantasy of mischievous humor and a true climax of a clear poetic design. One reason seems sometimes alone to justify this new license, this new French revolution: the deliverance from a stupid slavery of rules,—if we would only get the spirit of them without the inadequate letter. Better, of course, the rules than a fatal chaos. But there is here in the bold flight of these harmonies, soaring as though on some hidden straight path, a truly Promethean utterance.

It is significant, in the problem of future music, that of the symphonies based upon recent French ideas, the most subtly conceived and designed should have been written in America.

I.—In pale tint of harmony sways the impersonal phrase that begins with a descending tone. We may



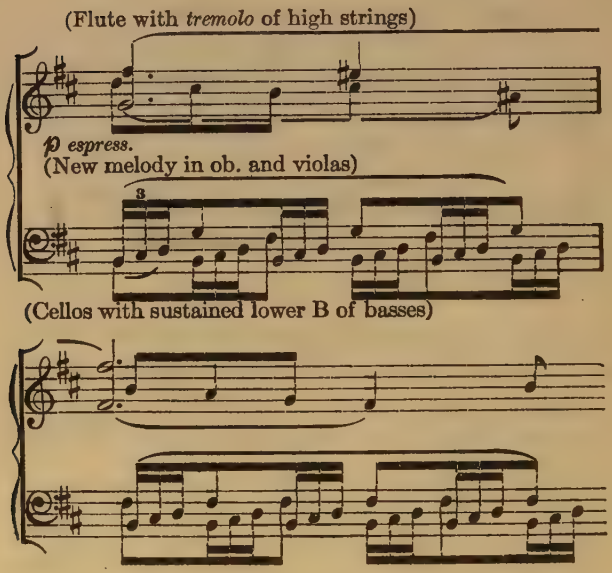
remember * how first with the symphony came a clear sense of tonal residence. It was like the age in painting when figures no longer hung in the gray air, when they were given a resting-place, with trees and a temple.

Here we find just the opposite flight from clear tonality, as if painting took to a Japanese manner, sans aught of locality. Where an easy half-step leads gently somewhere, a whole tone sings instead. Nothing obvious may stand.

It marks, in its reaction, the excessive stress of tonality and of simple colors of harmony. The basic sense of residence is not abandoned; there is merely a bolder search for new tints, a farther straying from the landmarks.

Soon our timid tune is joined by a more expressive line that rises in ardent reaches to a sudden tumult, with a fiery strain of trumpets where we catch a glimpse of the triplet figure. After a dulcet lullaby

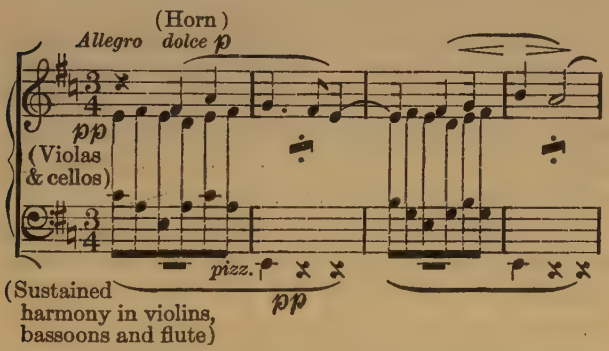
* See Vol I, Chapter I.



of the first air, the second flows in faster pace (*Allegro commodo*) as the real text, ever with new blossoming variants that sing together in a madrigal of tuneful voices, where the descending note still has a part in a smooth, gliding pace of violins.

In gayer mood comes a verse of the inverted (Allegro) tune, with other melodic guises hovering about. When the theme descends to the bass, the original Andante phrase sings in the trumpet, and there is a chain of entering voices, in growing agitation, in the main legend with the quicker sprites

dancing about. At the height, after the stirring song of trumpets, we feel a passionate strife of resolve and regret; and immediately after, the descending tone is echoed everywhere.

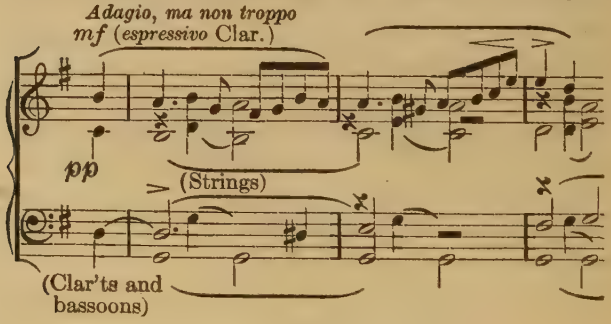
A balancing (second) theme now appears, in tran-

quil flow, but pressing on, at the end, in steady ascent as to Parnassian summit. Later comes a new rejoinder in livelier mood, till it is lost in a big, moving verse of the Andante song. But pert retorts from the latest new tune again fill the air, then yield in attendance upon the returning Allegro theme. Of subtle art is the woof of derived phrases. A companion melody, that seems fraught of the text of the second subject, sings with rising passion, while the lower brass blow lustily in eccentric rhythm of the Allegro phrase and at the height share in the dual triumph.

We feel a kinship of mood rather than of theme,

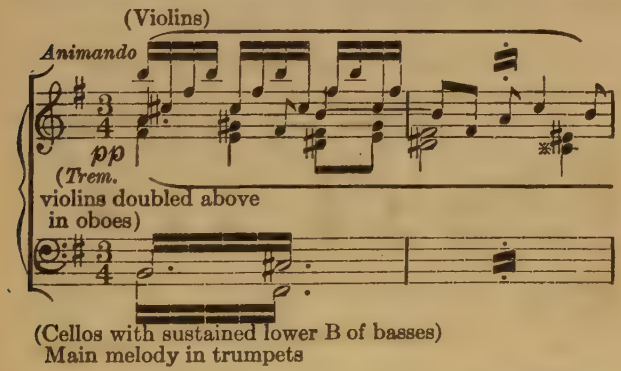
a coherence that we fear to relate to definite figures, though the descending symbol is clear against the ascending. An idyllic dialogue, with the continuing guise of the Allegro phrase turns to a gayer revel in the original pace, with a brilliant blare of trumpets.

The free use of themes is shown in the opposite moods of the triplet phrase, of sadness, as in Andante, or buoyant, in Allegro. Here are both in close transition as the various verses return from the beginning, entwined about the first strain of the Andante, gliding through the descending tone into the second soothing song with the Parnassian ascent.

A full verse of the first Andante melody sings at the heart of the plot, followed by the strange dæmonic play that keeps the mood within bounds. Indeed, it returns once more as at first, then springs into liveliest trip and rises to an Olympian height, with a final revel of the triplet figure.

II.—With a foreshadowing drop of tone begins the prelude, not unlike the first notes of the sym-

phony, answered with a brief phrase. On the descending motive the main melody is woven.

Tenderly they play together, the melody with the main burden, the lighter prelude phrase in graceful accompaniment. But now the latter sings in turn a serious verse, rises to a stormy height, the horns proclaiming the passionate plea amid a tumultuous accord of the other figures, and sinks in subdued temper. In a broader pace begins a new line, though on the thread of the descending motive, and with the entering phrase of the prelude winds to a climax of passion. The true episode, of refuge and solace from the stress of tempest, is in a song of the trumpet through a shimmering gauze of strings with glinting harp, to a soft murmuring in the reeds.



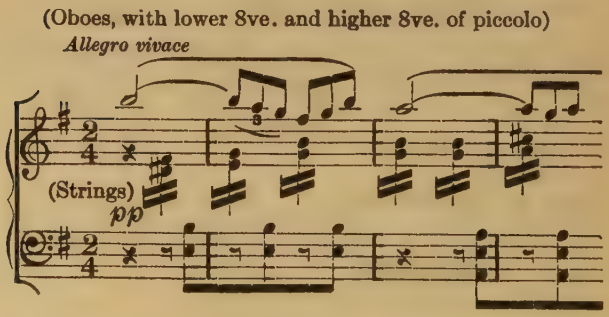
In a new shade of tone it is echoed by the horn, then in a fervent close it is blended with a guise of the prelude phrase, that now heralds the main

melody, in a duet of clarinet and violins. At last in the home tone the horn sings amid the sweet tracery the parting verse, and all about sounds the trist symbol of the first (descending) motive.

III.—The Scherzo is in one view a mad revel of demon pranks in a new field of harmonies. Inconsequential though they may seem, there is a real coherence, and, too, a subtle connection with the whole design.

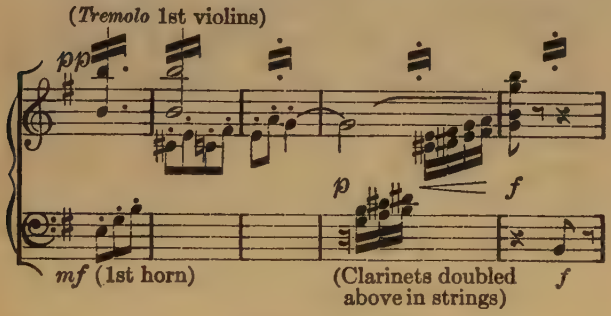
To be sure, with the vagueness of tune that belongs to a school of harmonic exploits a certain mutual relation of themes is a kind of incident. The less defined the phrases, the easier it is to make them similar.

Undoubted likeness there is between the main elfin figure and the first phrase of the symphony.



The triplet is itself a kind of password throughout. With this multiple similarity is a lack of the inner bond of outer contrast.

The mood of demon humor finds a native medium in the tricks of new Gallic harmony. Early in the prelude we hear the descending tone, a streak of sadness in the mirth. Answering the first burst is a strange stroke of humor in the horn, and as if in



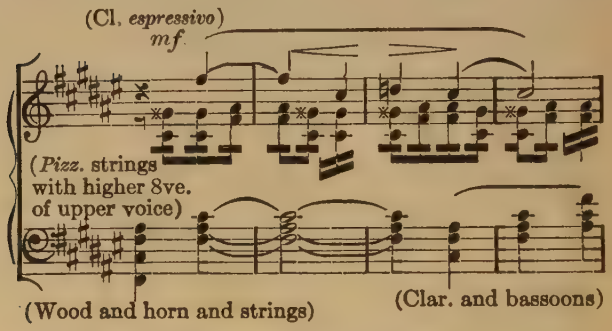
serious balance, a smooth gliding phrase in the wood. Now the first figure grows more articulate, romping and galloping into an ecstasy of fun. A certain spirit of Till Eulenspiegel hovers about.

Out of the maze blows a new line in muted trumpets, that begins with the inverted triplet figure, and in spite of the surrounding bedlam rises almost into a tune. At the height the strange jest of the horns reigns supreme.

From the mad gambols of the first figure comes a relief in sparkling calls of the brass and stirring retorts in pure ringing harmonies. In the next episode is a fall into a lyric mood as the latest figure glides into even pace, singing amid gentlest pranks.

Most tuneful of all sounds is the answer in dulcet trumpet while, above, the first theme intrudes softly.

The heart of the idyll comes in a song of the clari-



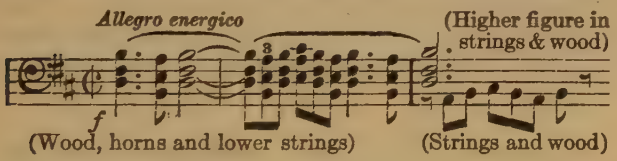
net against strange, murmuring strings, ever with a soft answer of the lower reed.

New invading sprites do not hem the flight of the melody. But at the height a redoubled pace turns the mood back to revelling mirth with broken bits of the horn tune. Indeed the crisis comes with a new rage of this symbol of mad abandon, in demonic strife with the fervent song that finally prevails.

The first theme returns with a new companion in the highest wood. A fresh strain of serious melody is now woven about the former dulcet melody of trumpet in a stretch of delicate poesy, of mingled mirth and tenderness.—The harmonies have something of the infinitesimal sounds that only insects hear. With all virtuous recoil, here we must confess is a masterpiece of cacophonic art, a new world of

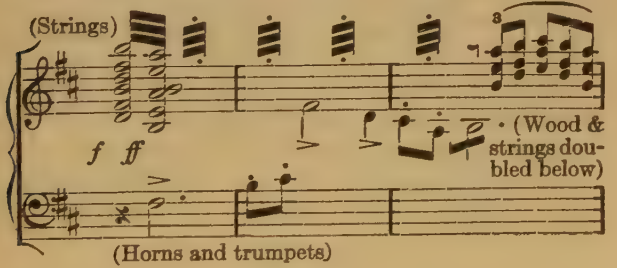
tones hitherto unconceived, tinkling and murmuring with the eerie charm of the forest.—In the return of the first prelude is a touch of the descending tone. From the final revelling tempest comes a sudden awakening. In strange moving harmony sings slowly the descending symbol, as if confessing the unsuccessful flight from regret. Timidly the vanquished sprites scurry away.

IV.—The first notes of the Finale blend and bring back the main motives. First is the descending tone, but firm and resolute, with the following triplet in



inversion of the Scherzo theme.

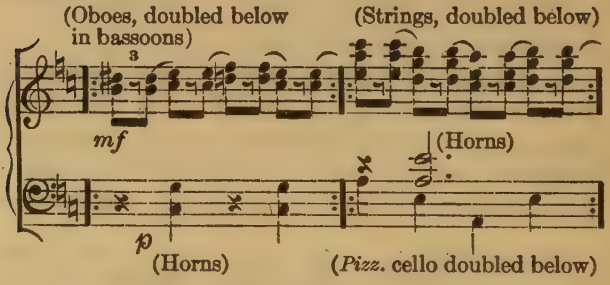
It is all in triumphant spirit. From the start the mood reigns, the art for once is quite subordinate. Resonant and compelling is the motive of horns and trumpets, new in temper, though harking back to the earlier text, in its cogent ending. Splendid is



the soaring flight through flashes of new chords. There is, we must yield, something Promethean, of new and true beauty, in the bold path of harmonies that the French are teaching us after a long age of slavish rules.

The harking back is here better than in most modern symphonies with their pedantic subtleties: in the resurgence of joyous mood, symbolized by the inversion of phrase, as when the prankish elfin theme rises in serious aspiration.

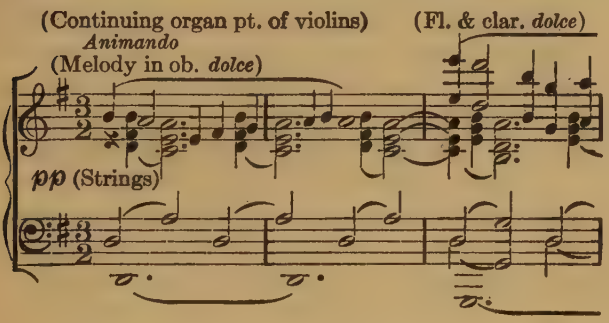
Out of these inspiriting reaches sings a new melody in canon of strings (though it may relate to some shadowy memory), while in the bass rolls the former ending phrase; then they romp in jovial turn of rhythm.



A vague and insignificant similarity of themes is a fault of the work and of the style, ever in high disdain of vernacular harmony, refreshing to be sure, in its saucy audacity, and anon enchanting with a ring of new, fiery chord. As the sonorous theme

sings in muted brass, picking strings mockingly play quicker fragments, infecting the rest with frivolous retorts, and then a heart-felt song pours forth, where the accompanying cries have softened their mirth. Back they skip to a joyous trip with at last pure ringing harmonies.

At the fervent pitch a blast of trumpets rises in challenging phrase, in incisive clash of chord, with the early sense of Parnassian ascent. At the end of this brave fanfare we hear a soft plea of the descending tone that prompts a song of true lyric melody, with the continuing gentlest touch of regret, all to a sweetly bewildering turn of pace. So tense



and subtle an expression would utterly convert us to the whole harmonic plan, were it not that just here, in these moving moments, we feel a return to clearer tonality. But it is a joy to testify to so devoted a work of art.

With the last notes of melody a new frisking tune

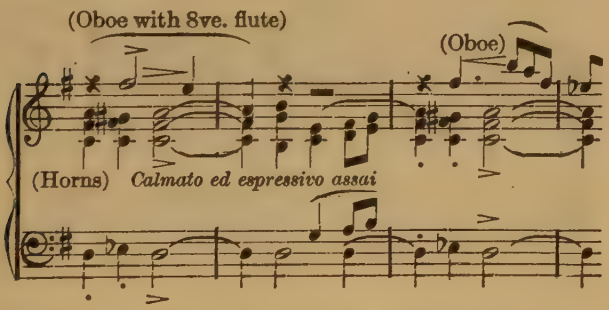
plays in sauciest clashes of chord, with an enchanting stretch of ringing brass. A long merriment ensues in the jovial trip, where the former theme of horns has a rising cadence; or the tripping tune sings in united chorus and again through its variants. After a noisy height the dulcet melody (from the descending tone) sings in linked sweetness. In the later tumult we rub our eyes to see a jovial theme of the bass take on the lines of the wistful melody. Finally, in majestic tread amid general joyous clatter the brass blow the gentle song in mellowed tones of richest harmony.

CHADWICK. SUITE SYMPHONIQUE (IN E FLAT).*

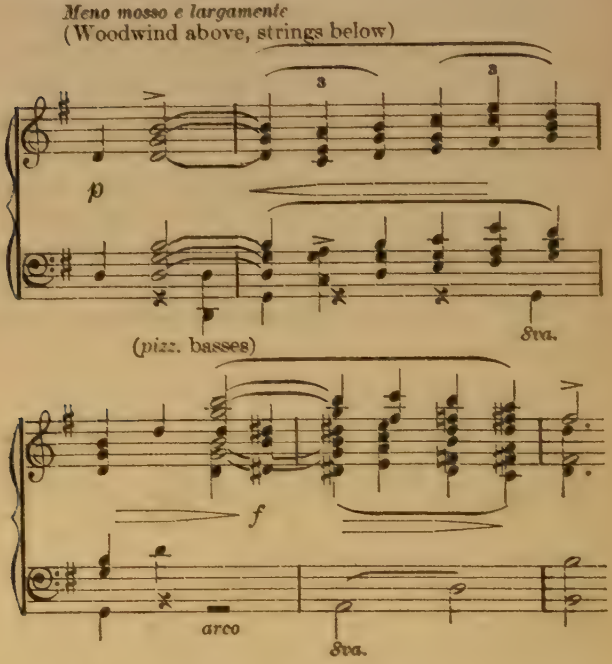
With a rush of harp and higher strings the Suite begins on ardent wing in exultant song of trumpets (with horns, bassoons and cellos) to quick palpitating violins that in its higher flight is given over to upper reeds and violas. It is answered by gracefully drooping melody of strings and harps topped by the oboes, that lightly descends from the heights with a cadence long delayed, like the circling flight of a great bird before he alights. Straightway begins a more pensive turn of phrase (of clarinet and lower strings) in distant tonal scene where now the former (descending) answer sings timidly in alternating groups. The pensive melody returns for a greater reach, blending with the original theme (in all the basses) in a glowing duet of two moods as well as

* George W. Chadwick, American, born in 1854.

melodies, rising to sudden brilliant height, pressing on to a full return of the first exultant melody with long, lingering, circling descent.

The listener on first hearing may be warned to have a sharp ear for all kinds of disguises of the stirring theme and in a less degree, of the second subject. What seems a new air in a tranquil spot, with strum of harp,—and new it is as expression,—is our main melody in a kind of inversion. And so a new tissue of song continues, all of the original fibre, calming more and more from the first fierce glow. A tuneful march-like strain now plays gently in the horns while the (inverted) expressive air still sounds above.

When all has quieted to dim echoing answers between horn and reed, a final strain bursts forth (like the nightingale's voice in the surrounding stillness) in full stress of its plaint. And so, in most natural course, grows and flows the main balancing melody

that now pours out its burden in slower, broader pace, in joint choirs of wood and strings.



It is the kind of lyric spot where the full stream of warm feeling seems set free after the storm of the first onset. In answer is a timid, almost halting strain in four parts of the wood, echoed in strings. A new agitation now stirs the joint choirs (with touches of brass), and anon comes a poignant line

of the inverted (main) theme. It drives in rising stress under the spurring summons of trumpets and horns to a celebration of the transfigured second melody, with triumphant cadence. Nor does the big impulse halt here. The trumpets sound on midst a spirited duet of inverted and original motives until the highest point is reached, where, to quicker calls of the brass, in broadest pace the main subject strikes its inverted tune in the trebles, while the bass rolls its majestic length in a companion melody; trombones, too, are blaring forth the call of the second theme.

Brief interludes of lesser agitation bring a second chorus on the reunited melodies in a new tonal quarter.

In mystic echoing groups on the former descending answer of main theme the mood deepens in darkening scene. Here moves in slow strides of lowest brass a shadowy line of the second melody answered by a poignant phrase of the first. Striking again and again in higher perches the dual song reaches a climax of feeling in overpowering burst of fullest brass. In masterful stride, still with a burden of sadness, it has a solacing tinge as it ends in a chord with pulsing harp, that twice repeated leads back to the stirring first song of main theme.

Thence the whole course is clear in the rehearsal of former melodies. Only the pensive air has lost its melancholy. Here is again the lyric of warm-hued horns with plaintive higher phrase, and the full

romance of second melody with its timid answer, where the nervous trip rouses slowly the final exultation. Yet there is one more descent into the depths where the main melody browses in dim searching. Slowly it wings its flight upwards until it is greeted by a bright burst of the second melody in a chorus of united brass. And this is but a prelude to the last joint song, with the inverted theme above. A fanfare of trumpets on the second motive ends the movement.

The Romanze is pure song in three verses where we cannot avoid a touch of Scottish, with the little acclaiming phrases. The theme is given to the saxophone (or cello) with obligato of clarinet and violas; the bass is in bassoons and *pizzicato* of lower strings. One feels a special gratitude to the composer who will write in these days a clear, simple, original and beautiful melody.

The first interlude is a fantasy, almost a variant on the theme in a minor melody of the wood, with a twittering phrase of violins. Later the strings take up the theme in pure *cantilena* in a turn to the major,—all in expressive song that rises to a fervent height. Though it grows out of the main theme, yet the change is clear in a return to the subject, now in true variation, where the saxophone has the longer notes and the clarinet and oboe sing in concert.

There follows a pure interlude, vague in motive, full of dainty touches. The oboe has a kind of *arioso*

phrase with trilling of flutes and clarinets, answered in trumpets and harp.

Later the first violins (on the G string) sing the main air with the saxophone.

A double character has the third movement as the title shows, though in a broadest sense it could all be taken as a Humoreske.

With a jaunty lilt of skipping strings the lower reeds strike the capricious tune, where the full chorus soon falls in. The answering melody, with more of sentiment, though always in graceful swing with tricksy attendant figures, has a longer song. Not least charm has the concluding tune that leads back to the whole melodious series. Throughout are certain chirping notes that form the external connection with the Humoreske that begins with strident theme (*molto robusto*) of low strings, the whole chorus, xylophon and all, clattering about, the high wood echoing like a band of giant crickets,—all in whimsical, varying pace. The humor grows more graceful when the first melody of the Intermezzo is lightly touched. The strange figure returns (in roughest strings and clarinet) somewhat in ancient manner of imitation. Later the chirruping answer recurs. Diminishing trills are echoed between the groups.

Slowly the scene grows stranger. Suddenly in eerie harmonies of newest French or oldest Tartar, here are the tricks and traits where meet the extremes of latest Romantic and primeval barbarian. In this

motley cloak sounds the typical Yankee tune, first piping in piccolo, then grunting in tuba. Here is Uncle Sam disporting himself merrily in foreign garb and scene, quite as if at home. If we wished, we might see a political satire as well as musical.

After a climax of the clownish mood we return to the Intermezzo melodies.

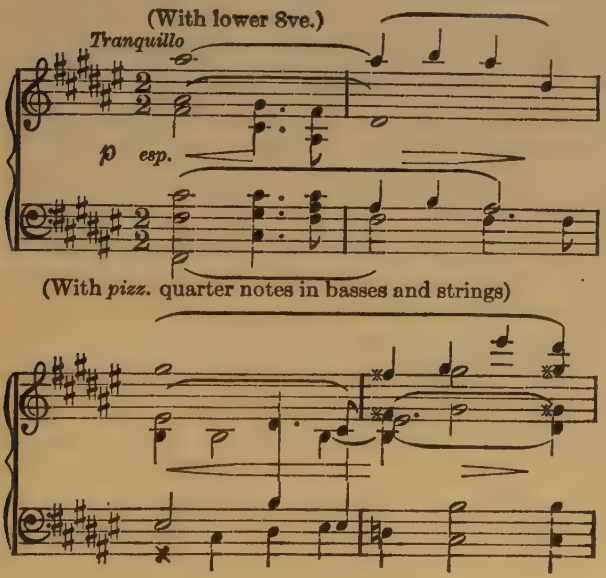
The Finale begins in the buoyant spirit of the beginning and seems again to have a touch of Scotch in the jaunty answer. The whole subject is a group of phrases rather than a single melody.

Preluding runs lead to the simple descending line of treble with opposite of basses, answered by the jovial phrase. In the farther course the first theme prevails, answered with an ascending brief motive of long notes in irregular ascent. Here follows a freer flow of the jolly lilting tune, blending with the sterner descending lines.

Balancing this group is an expressive melody of different sentiment. In its answer we have again the weird touch of neo-barbarism in a strain of the reed, with dancing overtones of violins and harp, and strumming chords on lower strings. Or is there a hint of ancient Highland in the drone of alternating horns and bassoons?

Its brief verse is answered by a fervent conclusive line where soon the old lilting refrain appears with new tricks and a big celebration of its own and then of the whole madrigal of martial melody. It simmers down with whims and turns of the skipping

phrase into the quiet (*tranquillo*) episode in the midst of the other stress.



The heart of the song is in the horns, with an upper air in the wood, while low strings guard a gentle rhythm. A brief strain in the wind in ardent temper is followed by another in the strings, and still a third in joint strings and wood. (Again we must rejoice in the achievement of true, simple, sincere melody.) The final glowing height is reached in all the choirs together,—final that is before the

brass is added with a broader pace, that leads to the moving climax. As the horns had preluding chords to the whole song, so a single horn sings a kind of epilogue amid harmony of strings and other horns. Slowly a more vigorous pulse is stirred, in an interlude of retorting trumpets.

Suddenly in the full energy of the beginning the whole main subject sounds again, with the jolly lilt dancing through all its measures, which are none too many. The foil of gentle melody returns with its answer of eerie tune and harmonies. It seems as if the poet, after his rude jest, wanted, half in amends, half on pure impulse, to utter a strain of true fancy in the strange new idiom.

A new, grateful sound has again the big conclusive phrase that merges into more pranks of the jaunty tune in the biggest revel of all, so that we suspect the jolly jester is the real hero and the majestic figures are, after all, mere background. And yet here follows the most tenderly moving verse, all unexpected, of the quiet episode.

The end is a pure romp, *molto vivace,* mainly on the skipping phrase. To be sure the stately figures after a festive height march in big, lengthened pace; but so does the jolly tune, as though in mockery. He breaks into his old rattling pace (in the Glockenspiel) when all the figures appear together,—the big ones changing places just before the end, where the main theme has the last say, now in the bass, amidst the final festivities.

LOEFFLER. LA VILLANELLE DU DIABLE*
(*The Devil's Round*)

(After a poem by M. Rollinat. Symphonic poem for Orchestra and Organ)

Few pieces of program music are so closely associated with the subject as this tone picture of the Devil's Round. The translation of M. Rollinat's "Villanelle," printed in the score is as follows: †

Hell's a-burning, burning, burning. Chuckling in clear staccato, the Devil prowling, runs about.

He watches, advances, retreats like zig-zag lightning; Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

In dive and cell, underground and in the air, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

Now he is flower, dragon-fly, woman, black-cat, green snake; Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

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* Charles Martin Loeffler, born in Alsace in 1861.

† A few translated verses may give an idea of the original rhythm:

Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.
Cackling in his impish play,
Here and there the Devil's turning,

Forward here and back again,
Zig-zag as the lightning's ray,
While the fires burn amain.

In the church and in the cell
In the caves, in open day,
Ever prowls the fiend of hell.

But in the original the first and last lines of the first verse are used as refrains in the succeeding verses, recurring alternately as the last line. In the final verse they are united.—The prose translation is by Philip Hale.

And now, with pointed moustache, scented with vetiver, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

Wherever mankind swarms, without rest, summer and winter, Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

From alcove to hall, and on the railways, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

He is Mr. Seen-at-Night, who saunters with staring eyes. Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

There floating as a bubble, here squirming as a worm, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

He's grand seigneur, tough, student, teacher. Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

He inoculates each soul with his bitter whispering: the Devil, prowling, runs about.

He promises, bargains, stipulates in gentle or proud tones. Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

Mocking pitilessly the unfortunate whom he destroys, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

He makes goodness ridiculous and the old man futile. Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

At the home of the priest or sceptic, whose soul or body he wishes, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

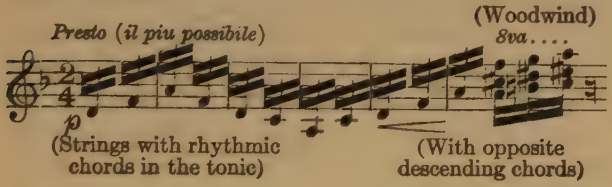
Beware of him to whom he toadies, and whom he calls "my dear sir." Hell's a-burning, burning, burning.

Friend of the tarantula, darkness, the odd number, the Devil, prowling, runs about.

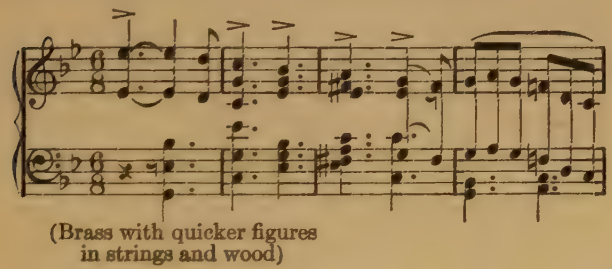
—My clock strikes midnight. If I should go to see Lucifer?—Hell's a-burning, burning, burning; the Devil, prowling, runs about.

In the maze of this modern setting of demon antics (not unlike, in conceit, the capers of Till Eulenspiegel), with an eloquent use of new French strokes of harmony, one must be eager to seize upon definite figures. In the beginning is a brief wandering or

flickering motive in furious pace of harp and strings, ending ever in a shriek of the high wood. Answering



is a descending phrase mainly in the brass, that ends in a rapid jingle.



There are various lesser motives, such as a minor scale of ascending thirds, and a group of crossing figures that seem a guise of the first motive. To be sure the picture lies less in the separate figures than in the mingled color and bustle. Special in its humor is a soft gliding or creeping phrase of three voices against a constant trip of cellos.

After a climax of the first motive a frolicking theme begins (in English horn and violas). If we were forced to guess, we could see here the dandy

devil, with pointed mustachios, frisking about. It is probably another guise of the second motive which presently appears in the bass. A little later, *dolce amabile* in a madrigal of wood and strings, we may see the gentlemanly devil, the gallant. With a crash of chord and a role of cymbals re-enters the first motive, to flickering harmonies of violins, harp and flutes, taken up by succeeding voices, all in the whole-tone scale. Hurrying to a clamorous height, the pace glides into a *Movimento di Valzer,* in massed volume, with the frolicking figure in festive array.

To softest tapping of lowest strings and drums, a shadow of the second figure passes here and there, with a flash of harp. Soon, in returning merriment, it is coursing in unison strings (against an opposite motion in the wood).

At the height of revel, as the strings are holding a trembling chord, a sprightly Gallic tune of the street pipes in the reed, with intermittent flash of the harp, and, to be sure, an unfamiliar tang of harmonies and strange perversions of the tune.* In

* "A la villette," a popular song of the Boulevard. Mr. Philip Hale, who may have been specially inspired, associates the song with the word "crapule," "tough," as he connects the following revolutionary songs, in contrapuntal use, with the word "magister," "teacher,"—the idea of the pedagogue in music. It may be less remote to find in these popular airs merely symbols or graphic touches of the swarming groups among which the Devil plies his trade.

the midst is the original flickering figure. As the whole chorus is singing the tune at the loudest, the brass breaks into another traditional air of the Revolutionary Song of 1789.* While the trip is still ringing in the strings, a lusty chorus breaks into the song † "La Carmagnole," against a blast of the horns in a guise of the first motive.

Grim guises of the main figures (in inverted profile) are skulking about to uncanny harmonies. A revel of new pranks dies down to chords of muted horns, amid flashing runs of the harp, with a long roll of drums. Here *Grave* in solemn pace, violas and bassoon strike an ecclesiastical incantation, answered by the organ. Presently a Gregorian plain chant begins solemnly in the strings aided by the organ while a guise of the second profane motive intrudes. Suddenly in quick pace against a fugal tread of lower voices, a light skipping figure dances in the high wood. And now loud trumpets are saucily blowing the chant to the quick step, echoed by the wood. And we catch the wicked song of the

* The famous "Ca ira."

† In the wealth of interesting detail furnished by Mr. Hale is the following: "The Carmagnole was first danced in Paris about the liberty-tree, and there was then no bloody suggestion. . . . The word '*Carmagnole*' is found in English and Scottish literature as a nickname for a soldier in the French Revolutionary army, and the term was applied by Burns to the Devil as the author of ruin, 'that curst carmagnole, auld Satan.'"

street (in the English horn) against a legend of hell in lower voices.*

In still livelier pace the reeds sound the street song against a trip of strings, luring the other voices into a furious chorus. All at once, the harp and violins strike the midnight hour to a chord of horns, while a single impish figure dances here or there. To trembling strings and flashing harp the high reed pipes again the song of the Boulevard, echoed by low bassoons.

In rapidest swing the original main motives now sing a joint verse in a kind of *reprise,* with the wild shriek at the end of the line, to a final crashing height. The end comes with dashes of the harp, betwixt pausing chords in the high wood, with a final stifled note.

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* The religious phrases are naturally related to the "priest or sceptic." In the rapid, skipping rhythm, Mr. Hale finds the tarentella suggested by the "friend of the tarantula."

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